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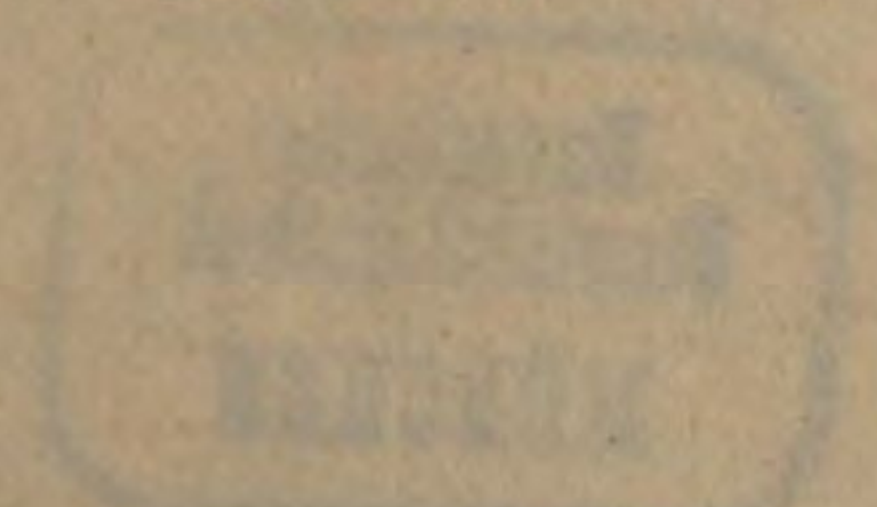
PAST AND PRESENT.

EIGHT LECTURES

BY

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ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.


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P R E F A C E.

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

A SERIES of four lectures which I delivered last spring to the pupils of King's College School, London, supplied the foundation to this present volume. These lectures, which I was obliged to prepare in haste, on a brief invitation, and under the pressure of other engagements, being subsequently enlarged and recast, were delivered in the autumn somewhat more nearly in their present shape to the pupils of the Training School, Winchester; with only those alterations, omissions and additions, which the difference in my hearers suggested as necessary or desirable. I have found it convenient to keep the lectures, as regards the persons presumed to be addressed, in that earlier form which I had sketched out at the first; and, inasmuch as it helps much to keep lectures vivid and real that one should have some well-

defined audience, if not actually before one, yet before the mind's eye, to suppose myself throughout addressing my first hearers. I have supposed myself, that is, addressing a body of young Englishmen, all with a fair amount of classical knowledge (in my explanations I have sometimes had others with less than theirs in my eye), not wholly unacquainted with modern languages ; but not yet with any special designation as to their future work ; having only as yet marked out to them the duty in general of living lives worthy of those who have England for their native country, and English for their native tongue. To lead such through a more intimate knowledge of this into a greater love of that, has been a principal aim which I have set before myself throughout.

ITCHENSTOKE : *Feb.* 7, 1855.

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ERRATUM

Page 14, line 5 note, *for* dinas *read* dinar.

ENGLISH

PAST AND PRESENT.

LECTURE I.

THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

A VERY slight acquaintance with the history of our own language will teach us that the speech of Chaucer's age is not the speech of Skelton's, that there is a great difference between the language under Elizabeth and that under Charles the First, between that under Charles the First and Charles the Second, between that under Charles the Second and Queen Anne; that considerable changes had taken place between the beginning and the middle of the last century, and that Johnson and Fielding did not write altogether as we do now. For in the course of a nation's progress new ideas are evermore mounting above the horizon, while others are lost sight of and sink below it: others again change their form and aspect: others which seemed united, split into parts. And as it is with ideas, so it is with their symbols, words. New ones are perpetually coined to meet the demand of an advanced understanding, of new feelings that have sprung out of the decay of old ones, of ideas

that have shot forth from the summit of the tree of our knowledge ; old words meanwhile fall into disuse and become obsolete ; others have their meaning narrowed and defined ; synonyms diverge from each other and their property is parted between them ; nay, whole classes of words will now and then be thrown overboard, as new feelings or perceptions of analogy gain ground. A history of the language in which all these vicissitudes should be pointed out, in which the introduction of every new word should be noted, so far as it is possible—and much may be done in this way by laborious and diligent and judicious research—in which such words as have become obsolete should be followed down to their final extinction, in which all the most remarkable words should be traced through their successive phases of meaning, and in which moreover the causes and occasions of these changes should be explained, such a work would not only abound in entertainment, but would throw more light on the development of the human mind than all the brainspun systems of metaphysics that ever were written.'

These words are not my own, but the words of a greatly honoured friend and teacher, who, though we behold him now no more, still teaches, and will teach, by the wisdom of his writings, and the remembered nobleness of his life. They are words of Archdeacon Hare. I have put them in the forefront of my lectures ; anticipating as they do, in the way of masterly sketch, all or nearly all which I shall attempt to accomplish ; and indeed drawing out the lines of very much more, to which I shall not venture to put

my hand. At the same time the subject is one which, even with my partial and imperfect handling, will, I trust, find an answer and an echo in the hearts of all whom I address; which every Englishman will feel of near concern and interest to himself. For, indeed, the love of our native language, what is it in fact, but the love of our native land expressing itself in one particular direction? If the noble acts of that nation to which we belong are precious to us, if we feel ourselves made greater by the greatness, summoned to a nobler life by the nobleness of Englishmen, who have already lived and died, and have bequeathed to us a name which must not by us be made less, what exploits of theirs can well be worthier, what can more clearly point out their native land and ours as having fulfilled a glorious past, as being destined for a glorious future, than that they should have acquired for themselves and for us a clear, a strong, an harmonious, a noble language? For all this bears witness to corresponding merits in those that speak it, to clearness of mental vision, to strength, to harmony, to nobleness in them who have gradually shaped and fashioned it to be the utterance of their inmost life and being.

To know concerning this language, the stages which it has gone through, the sources from which its riches have been derived, the gains which it has made or is now making, the perils which are threatening it, the losses which it has sustained, the capacities which may be yet latent in it, waiting to be evoked, the points in which it transcends other tongues, the points in which it comes short of them, all this may well be the object of worthy ambition to every one of us. So may we hope to be ourselves guardians of its purity,

and not corruptors of it; to introduce, it may be, others into an intelligent knowledge of that, with which we shall have ourselves more than a merely superficial acquaintance; to bequeath it to those who come after us not worse than we received it ourselves. 'Spartam nactus es; hanc exorna,'—this should be our motto in respect at once of our country, and of the speech of our country.

Nor is a study such as this alien or remote from the purposes which have brought us hither. It is true that within these walls we are mainly occupied in learning other tongues than our own. The time we bestow upon it is small as compared with that bestowed on those others. And yet one of our main objects in learning them is that we may better understand this. Nor ought any other to dispute with it the first and foremost place in our reverence, our gratitude, and our love. It has been well and worthily said by an illustrious German scholar, 'The care of the national language I consider as at all times a sacred trust and a most important privilege of the higher orders of society. Every man of education should make it the object of his unceasing concern, to preserve his language pure and entire, to speak it, so far as is in his power, in all its beauty and perfection. . . . A nation whose language becomes rude and barbarous, must be on the brink of barbarism in regard to everything else. A nation which allows her language to go to ruin, is parting with the best half of her intellectual independence, and testifies her willingness to cease to exist.'¹

¹ F. Schlegel, *History of Literature*, Lecture 10. Milton;

But this knowledge, like all other knowledge which is worth attaining, is only to be attained at the price of labour and pains. The language which at this day we employ is the result of processes which have been going forward for hundreds and for thousands of years. Nay more,—it is not too much to affirm that processes modifying the English which we now write and speak, have been operating from the first day that man, being gifted with discourse of reason, projected his thought from himself, and embodied and contemplated it in his word. Which things being so, if we would understand this language as it now is, we must know something of it as it has been ; we must be able to measure, however roughly, the forces which have been at work upon it, moulding and shaping it into the forms, and bringing it into the conditions under which it now exists.

At the same time various prudential considerations must determine for us how far up we will endeavour to trace the course of its history. There are those who may seek to trace our language to the forests of Germany and Scandinavia, to investigate its relation to all the kindred tongues that were there spoken ; again, to follow it up, till it and they are seen descending from an elder stock ; nor once to pause, till they have assigned to it its proper place not merely in that smaller group of languages which are immediately round it, but in respect of all the tongues and lan-

Verba enim partim inscita et putida, partim mendosa et perperam prolata, quid si ignavos et oscitantes, et ad servile quidvis jam olim paratos incolarum animos haud levi indicio declarant ? I have elsewhere quoted this remarkable passage at full (*Study of Words*, 12th edit. p. 83).

guages of the earth. I can imagine few studies of a more surpassing interest than this. Others, however, must be content with seeking such insight into their native language as may be within the reach of all who, unable to make this the subject of especial research, possessing neither that vast compass of knowledge, nor that immense apparatus of books, not being at liberty to yield to it that devotion almost of a life which, followed out to the full, it would require, have yet an intelligent interest in their mother tongue, and desire to learn as much of its growth and history and construction as may be fairly within their reach. To such I shall suppose myself to be speaking. I assume no higher ground than this for myself.

I know, indeed, that some, when invited at all to enter upon the past history of the English language, are inclined to answer—‘To what end such studies to us? Why cannot we leave them to a few antiquaries and grammarians? Sufficient to us to know the laws of our present English, to obtain an acquaintance as accurate as we can with the language as we now find it, without concerning ourselves with the phases through which it has previously passed.’ This may sound plausible enough; and I can quite understand a real lover of his native tongue, who has not bestowed much thought upon the subject, taking up such a position as this. And yet it is one which cannot be maintained. A sufficient reason why we should occupy ourselves with the past of our language is, that the present is only intelligible in the light of the past, often of a very remote past indeed. There are in it anomalies out of number, which the pure logic of grammar is quite incapable of explaining;

which nothing but an acquaintance with its historic evolutions, and with the disturbing forces which have made themselves felt therein, will ever enable us to understand; not to say that, unless we possess some such knowledge of the past, we cannot ourselves advance a single step in the unfolding of the latent capabilities of the language, without the danger of doing some outrage to its genius, of committing some barbarous violation of its very primary laws.¹

The plan which I have laid down for myself in these lectures will be as follows. In this my first I shall invite you to consider the language as now it is, to decompose some specimens of it, and in this way to prove, of what elements it is compact, and what functions in it these elements severally fulfil. Nor shall I leave this subject without asking you to admire the happy marriage in our tongue of the languages of the North and South, a marriage giving to it advantages which no other of the languages of Europe enjoys. Having thus before us the body which we wish to submit to scrutiny, and having become acquainted, however slightly, with its composition, I shall invite you in my next to consider with me what this actual language might have been, if that event, which more than all other put together has affected and modified the English language, namely the Norman

¹ Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 485) : Une langue ne peut être conservée dans sa pureté qu'autant qu'elle est étudiée dans son histoire, ramenée à ses sources, appuyée à ses traditions. Aussi l'étude de la vieille langue est un élément nécessaire, lequel venant à faire défaut, la connaissance du langage moderne est sans profondeur, et le bon usage sans racines. Compare Pellissier, *La Langue Française*, p. 259.

Conquest, had never found place. In the lectures which follow I shall seek to institute from various points of view a comparison between the present language and the past; to point out gains which it has made, losses which it has endured, and generally to call your attention to some of the more important changes through which it has passed, or is at this present passing.

I shall, indeed, everywhere solicit your attention not merely to the changes which have been in time past effected, but to those also which at this very moment are going forward. I shall not account the fact that some are proceeding, so to speak, under our own eyes, a sufficient ground to excuse me from noticing them, but rather an additional reason for so doing. For indeed these changes which we are ourselves helping to bring about, are the very ones which we are most likely to fail in observing. So many causes contribute to withdraw them from notice, to veil their operation, to conceal their significance, that, save by a very few, they will commonly pass wholly unobserved. Loud and sudden revolutions attract and even compel observation; but revolutions silent and gradual, although with issues far vaster in store, run their course, and it is only when their cycle is nearly or quite completed, that men perceive what mighty transforming forces have been at work unnoticed in their very midst.

Thus, in this matter of language, how few aged persons, even among those who retain the fullest possession of their faculties, are conscious of any serious difference between the spoken language of their early youth, and that of their old age; are aware that words

and ways of using words are obsolete now, which were usual then ; that many words are current now, which had no existence at that time. And yet it is certain that so it must be. A man may fairly be assumed to remember clearly and well for sixty years back ; and it needs less than five of these sixties to bring us to the age of Spenser, and not more than eight to set us in the time of Chaucer and Wiclif. No one, contemplating this whole term, will deny the immensity of the change within these eight memories. And yet, for all this, we may be tolerably sure that, had it been possible to interrogate a series of eight persons, such as together had filled up this time, intelligent men, but men whose attention had not been especially awakened to this subject, each in his turn would have denied that there had been any change worth speaking of, perhaps any change at all, during his lifetime. It is not the less sure, considering the multitude of words which have fallen into oblivion during these four or five hundred years, that there must have been some lives in this chain which saw those words in use at their commencement, and out of use before their close. And so too, of the multitude of words which have sprung up in this period, some, nay, a vast number, must have come into being within the limits of each of these lives.¹

¹ See on this subject the deeply interesting chapter, the 23rd, in Sir C. Lyell's *Antiquity of Man*, with the title, *Origin and Development of Languages and Species compared*. I quote a few words : ' Every one may have noticed in his own lifetime the stealing in of some slight alterations of accent, pronunciation, or spelling, or the introduction of some words borrowed from a foreign language to express ideas of which no native term

Nor is it hard on a little reflection to perceive how this going and coming have alike been hid from their eyes. In the nature of things, words which go excite little or no notice in their going. They drop out of use little by little, no one noticing the fact. The student, indeed, of a past epoch of our literature finds words to have been freely used in it which are not employed in his own; and these, when all brought into a vocabulary, by no means to be few in number. But it was only one by one that they fell out of sight, and this by steps the most gradual; were first more seldom used, then only by those who affected a somewhat archaic style, and lastly not at all. And as with the outgoers, so in a measure also is it with the incomers. The newness and strangeness of them, even where there is knowledge and observation sufficient to recognise them as novelties at all, wears off very much sooner than would be supposed. They are but

precisely conveyed the import. He may also remember hearing for the first time some cant terms or slang phrases, which have since forced their way into common use, in spite of the efforts of the purists. But he may still contend that "within the range of his experience" his language has continued unchanged, and he may believe in its immutability in spite of minor variations. The real question, however, at issue is, whether there are any limits to this variability. He will find, on further investigation, that new technical terms are coined almost daily, in various arts, sciences, professions, and trades, that new names must be found for new inventions; that many of these acquire a metaphorical sense, and then make their way into general circulation, as "stereotyped" for instance, which would have been as meaningless to the men of the seventeenth century as would the new terms and images derived from steamboat and railway travelling to the men of the eighteenth."

of yesterday; and men presently employ them as though they had existed as long as the language itself. Nor is it words only which thus steal out of the language and steal into it, unobserved in their coming and their going. It is the same with numbers, tenses, and moods, with old laws of the language which gradually lose their authority, with new usages which gradually acquire the force of laws. Thus it would be curious to know how many have had their attention drawn to the fact that the subjunctive mood is at this very moment perishing in English. One who now says, 'If he *call*, tell him I am out'—many do say it still, but they are fewer every day—is seeking to detain a mood which the language is determined to get rid of. The English-speaking race has come to perceive that clearness does not require the maintenance of any distinction between the indicative and subjunctive moods, and has therefore resolved not to be at the trouble of maintaining it any more. But the dropping of the subjunctive, important change as it is, goes on for the most part unmarked even by those who are themselves effecting the change. On this matter, however, I shall have by and by something more to say.

With these preliminary remarks I address myself to our special subject of to-day. And first, starting from the recognised fact that the English is not a simple but a composite language, made up of several elements, so far at least as its vocabulary is concerned, as are the people who speak it, I would suggest to you the profit to be derived from a resolving of it into its component parts—from taking, that is, some passage of English, distributing the words of which it

is made up according to the sources whence they are drawn ; estimating the relative numbers and proportion which these languages have severally lent us ; as well as the character of the words which they have contributed to the common stock.

Thus, suppose the English language to be divided into a hundred parts ; of these, to make a rough distribution, sixty might be Saxon ; thirty Latin (including of course the Latin which has come to us through the French) ; five perhaps would be Greek. We should in this way have allotted ninety-five parts, leaving the other five to be divided among all the other languages which have made their several smaller contributions to the vocabulary of our English tongue. It is probable that, all counted, they would not amount to this five in the hundred. They certainly would not, unless we included in this list words which we owe to languages closely allied to the Anglo-Saxon, but which are not found in the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary. I refer to those, Scandinavian we may call them for convenience, for which we are mainly indebted to the Danish settlements in the north of England. Let me speak first of these. It would be idle to attempt an exhaustive enumeration of them ; but a small selection will show of how serviceable a character they are, and what an important part of our every-day working English they form. Thus take these nouns, 'bag,' 'bole,' 'booty,' 'brag,' 'brink,' 'bull,' 'cake,' 'cripple,' 'dairy,' 'earl,' 'fell,' 'fellow,' 'fool,' 'froth,' 'gable,' 'gill,' 'gin,' 'hustings,' 'keg,' 'kid,' 'leg,' 'muck,' 'odds,' 'puck,' 'rump,' 'root,' 'sark,' 'scald,' 'screw,' 'scull,' 'skill,' 'sky,' 'sleight,' 'tarn,' 'thrum,' 'tyke,' 'windlass,' 'window ;'

or, again, these verbs, 'to bask,' 'to clip,' 'to cuff,' 'to curl,' 'to daze,' 'to droop,' 'to dub,' 'to flit,' 'to grovel,' 'to hale,' 'to hug,' 'to lurk,' 'to mumble,' 'to ransack,' 'to scrub,' 'to skulk,' 'to thrive,' 'to thrust.' Then too there are Dutch words, especially sea-terms, which have found their way into English, as 'block,' 'boom,' 'dogger,' 'hoy,' 'landscape,' 'lubber,' 'schooner,' 'skates,' 'skipper,' 'sloop,' 'smack,' 'stiver,' 'tafferel,' 'yacht,' 'to loiter,' 'to luff,' 'to ruffle,' 'to smuggle.'

But to look now farther abroad. We have a certain number of Hebrew words, mostly, if not entirely, belonging to religious matters, as 'amen,' 'cabala,' 'cherub,' 'ephod,' 'gehenna,' 'hallelujah,' 'hosanna,' 'jubilee,' 'leviathan,' 'manna,' 'Messiah,' 'Pharisee,' 'sabbath,' 'Satan,' 'seraph,' 'shibboleth,' 'talmud,' 'targum.' A few more, mostly having to do with weights and measures, are in our Version of Scripture, and have scarcely past beyond it, as 'bath,' 'ephah,' 'hin,' 'omer.' The Arabic words in our language are more numerous; we have several arithmetical and astronomical terms, as 'aldebaran,' 'algebra,' 'algorithm,' or more popularly 'augrim' (now obsolete), 'almanach,' 'azimuth,' 'cypher,'¹ 'nadir,' 'talisman,' 'zenith,' 'zero;' and chemical no less; for the Arabs were the chemists, no less than the astronomers and arithmeticians of the middle ages; as 'alcohol,' 'alembic,' 'alkali,' 'elixir.' Add to these the names of animals, plants, fruits, or articles of merchandize first introduced by them to the notice of Western Europe; as 'amber,' 'antimonium,' 'apri-

¹ But see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 985.

cot,'¹ 'arrack,' 'artichoke,' 'barragan,' 'bournous,' 'camphor,' 'carmine,' 'cimarre,' 'coffee,' 'cotton,' 'crimson,' 'endive,' 'gazelle,' 'giraffe,' 'henna,' 'jar,' 'jasmine,' 'kermes,' 'lake' (lacca), 'laudanum,' 'lemon,' 'lime,' 'lute,' 'mattress,' 'mummy,' 'musk,' 'popinjay,' 'saffron,' 'senna,' 'sequin,' 'sherbet,' 'sirup,' 'shrub,' 'sofa,' 'sugar,' 'sumach,' 'talc,' 'tamarind ;' and some further terms, 'admiral,' 'alcove,'² 'alguazil,' 'amulet,' 'arsenal,' 'assassin,' 'azure,' 'barbican,' 'caliph,' 'caffre,' 'carat,'³ 'caravan,' 'dey,' 'divan,' 'dragoman,'⁴ 'emir,' 'fakir,' 'felucca,' 'firman,'

¹ See Mahn, *Etymol. Untersuch.* p. 49.

² See Mahn, p. 156.

³ This is the Greek *κεράτιον* which, having travelled to the East, has in this shape come back to us, just as *δηνάριον* has returned in the 'dinas' of the *Arabian Nights*.

⁴ The word hardly deserves to be called English, yet in Pope's time it had made some progress towards naturalization. Of a real or pretended polyglottist, who might thus have served as an universal *interpreter*, he says :

'Pity you was not *druggerman* at Babel.'

'Truckman,' or more commonly 'truchman,' familiar to all readers of our early literature, is only another form of this, which probably has come to us through 'turcimanno,' an Italian form of the word. Let me here observe that in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, b. i. § 75, there can be no doubt that for 'trustman,' as it is printed in all editions which I have been able to consult, we should read 'truchman.' Prince Charles at the time of his visit to Madrid not speaking Spanish, the king, we are told, summoned the Earl of Bristol into the coach with them 'that he should serve as a *trustman*,'—a word yielding no kind of sense ; or rather no word at all, but only the ignorant correction of some scribe or printer, to whom 'truchman' was strange.

‘hanger,’ ‘harem,’ ‘hazard,’ ‘hegira,’ ‘houri,’ ‘imaum,’ ‘islam,’ ‘koran,’ ‘magazine,’ ‘mamaluke,’ ‘marabout,’ ‘minaret,’ ‘monsoon,’ ‘mosque,’ ‘mufti,’ ‘mussulman,’ ‘nabob,’ ‘otto,’ ‘quintal,’ ‘ramadan,’ ‘razzia,’ ‘sahara,’ ‘salaam,’ ‘scheik,’ ‘simoom,’ ‘sirocco,’ ‘sultan,’ ‘tarif,’ ‘vizier,’ ‘wady,’ and I believe we shall have nearly completed the list. Of Persian words we have these: ‘bashaw,’ ‘bazaar,’ ‘bezoar,’ ‘caravan,’ ‘caravanserai,’ ‘check,’ ‘chess,’ ‘dervish,’ ‘jackal,’ ‘lilac,’ ‘nectarine,’ ‘orange,’ ‘pagoda,’ ‘saraband,’ ‘sash,’ ‘scarlet,’ ‘se-poy,’ ‘shagreen,’ ‘shawl,’ ‘taffeta,’ ‘tambour,’ ‘turban;’ this last appearing in strange forms, ‘tolibant’ (Puttenham), ‘tulipant’ (Herbert’s *Travels*), ‘turribant’ (Spenser), ‘turbat,’ ‘turbant,’ and at length ‘turban;’ ‘zemindar,’ ‘zenana.’ We have also a few Turkish, such as ‘bey,’ ‘caftan,’ ‘chouse,’ ‘fez,’ ‘janisary,’ ‘khan,’ ‘odalisk,’ ‘shagreen,’ ‘scimitar,’ ‘tulip,’ ‘xebek.’ Of ‘civet’ and ‘mohair,’ I believe it can only be asserted that they are Eastern. ‘Amuck,’ ‘bamboo,’ ‘cas-sowary,’ ‘gamboge,’ ‘gong,’ ‘gutta-percha,’ ‘rattan,’ ‘sago,’ ‘upas,’ ‘urang-utang,’ are Malay. The following are Hindostanee: ‘avatar,’ ‘banian,’ ‘bungalow,’ ‘calico,’ ‘chintz,’ ‘coolie,’ ‘cowrie,’ ‘curry,’ ‘jungle,’ ‘lac,’ ‘loot,’ ‘muslin,’ ‘pariah,’ ‘punch,’ ‘rajah,’ ‘rupee,’ ‘toddy.’ ‘Tea,’ or ‘tcha,’ as it was once spelt, ‘bohea,’ ‘hyson,’ ‘souchong,’ are Chinese; so too are ‘caddy,’ ‘junk,’ ‘hong,’ ‘nankeen,’ ‘satin;’ while ‘bonze’ is Japanese.

To come nearer home—we have a certain number of Italian words, as ‘ambuscade,’ ‘bagatelle,’ ‘balcony,’ ‘baldachin,’ ‘balustrade,’ ‘bandit,’ ‘bankrupt,’ ‘banquet,’ ‘bravo,’ ‘broccoli,’ ‘buffoon,’ ‘burlesque,’ ‘bust’ (it was ‘busto’ at first, drawn therefore from the Italian,

not from the French), 'cadence,' 'cascade,' 'cameo,' 'canto,' 'caricature,' 'carnival,' 'cartoon,' 'casemate,' 'casino,' 'catafalque,' 'cavalcade,' 'charlatan,' 'citadel,' 'concert,' 'conversazione,' 'corridor,' 'cupola,' 'curvet,' 'dilettante,' 'ditto,' 'doge,' 'domino,' 'extravaganza,' 'fiasco,' 'filagree,' 'fresco,' 'gabion,' 'gazette,' 'generalissimo,' 'gondola,' 'gonfalon,' 'grotto' ('grotta' in Bacon), 'gusto,' 'harlequin,' 'imbroglio,' 'inamorato,' 'influenza,' 'intaglio,' 'lagoon,' 'lava,' 'lavolta,' 'lazaretto,' 'macaroni,' 'madonna,' 'madrepore,' 'madrigal,' 'malaria,' 'manifesto,' 'maraschino,' 'masquerade' ('mascarata' in Hacket), 'mezzotint,' 'motett,' 'motto,' 'moustachio' ('mostaccio' in Ben Jonson), 'nuncio,' 'opera,' 'oratorio,' 'pantaloon,' 'parapet,' 'pedant,' 'pedantry,' 'pianoforte,' 'piaster,' 'piazza,' 'porcelain,' 'portico,' 'protocol,' 'proviso,' 'regatta,' 'ridotto,' 'rocket,' 'ruffian,' 'scaramouch,' 'seraglio,' 'serenade,' 'sirocco,' 'sketch,' 'solo,' 'sonnet,' 'stanza,' 'stileto,' 'stucco,' 'studio,' 'tarantula,' 'terrace,' 'terracotta,' 'torso,' 'trombone,' 'umbrella,' 'vedette,' 'vermicelli,' 'violoncello,' 'virtuoso,' 'vista,' 'volcano,' 'zany.' Others, once common enough, as 'battalia' ('battaglia'), 'becco,' 'bordello,' 'cornuto,' 'fantastico,' 'impresa' (the armorial device on shields), 'magnifico,' 'malgrado' (=maugre) 'saltimbanco' (=mountebank), are now obsolete. Sylvester has 'farfalla' for butterfly, but, so far as I know, this use is peculiar to him.

If this is at all a complete collection of our Italian words, the Spanish in the language are nearly as numerous. It would be nothing wonderful if they were more; for although our literary relations with Spain have been slight indeed as compared with those

which we have maintained with Italy, we have had other points of contact, friendly and hostile, with the former much more real than we have known with the latter. Thus we have from the Spanish, 'albino,' 'alligator' (el lagarto), 'armada,' 'armadillo,' 'barricade,' 'bastinado,' 'bolero,' 'bravado,' 'buffalo' ('buff' or 'buffle' is the proper English word), 'cambist,' 'camisado,' 'cannibal,' 'caracole,' 'caravel,' 'carbonado,' 'cargo,' 'carrack,' 'cartel,' 'cigar,' 'cochineal,' 'commodore,' 'creole,' 'desperado,' 'don,' 'duenna,' 'eldorado,' 'embargo,' 'fandango,' 'farthingale,' 'filibuster,' 'flamingo' (flamenco), 'flotilla,' 'gala,' 'garotte,' 'grandee,' 'grenade,' 'guerilla,' 'hackney,' 'hooker,'¹ 'indigo,' 'infanta,' 'jennet,' 'junto,' 'maravedi,' 'maroon,'² 'matadore,' 'merino,' 'molasses,' 'mosquito,' 'mulatto,' 'negro,' 'olio,' 'ombre,' 'palaver,' 'parade,' 'paragon,' 'parasol,' 'parroquet,' 'peccadillo,' 'picaroon,' 'pintado,' 'platina,' 'poncho,' 'punctilio' (for a long time spelt 'puntillo' in English books), 'quinine,' 'reformado,' 'salver,' 'sarsaparilla,' 'sassafras,' 'sherry,' 'soda,' 'stampede,' 'stoccado,' 'strappado,' 'tornado,' 'vanilla,' 'verandah.' 'Caprice' too we obtained rather from Spain than Italy; it was written 'capricho' by those who used it first. Other Spanish words, once familiar, are now extinct. 'Punc-

¹ Not in our dictionaries; but a kind of coasting vessel well known to seafaring men, the Spanish 'urca'; thus in Oldys' *Life of Raleigh*: 'Their galleons, galleasses, gallies, *urcas*, and zabras were miserably shattered.'

² A 'maroon' is a negro who has escaped to the woods, and there lives wild. The word is a corruption of 'cimarron,' signifying wild in Spanish. In our earlier discoverers it still retains its shape (Drake writes it 'symaron'), though not its spelling. See *Notes and Queries*, 1866, p. 86.

tilio' lives on, but not 'punto,' which is common enough in Bacon. 'Privado,' a prince's favourite, one admitted to his *privacy* (frequent in Jeremy Taylor and Fuller), has disappeared; so too have 'quirpo' (cuerpo), a jacket fitting close to the *body*; 'quellio' (cuello), a ruff or *neck-collar*; 'matachin,' the title of a sword-dance; all frequent in our early dramatists; and 'flota,' the constant name of the treasure-fleet from the Indies. 'Intermess,' employed by Evelyn, is the Spanish 'entremes,' though not recognized as such in our dictionaries. 'Albatross,' 'bayadere' (bailadeira), 'gentoo,' 'mandarin,' 'marmalade,' 'moidore,' 'palanquin,' 'yam,' are Portuguese.

Celtic *things* for the most part we designate by Celtic words; such as 'bannock,' 'bard,' 'brogues,' 'clan,' 'claymore,' 'cromlech,' 'fillibeg,' 'kilt,' 'pi-broch,' 'plaid,' 'reel,' 'shamrock,' 'slogan,' 'usquebaugh,' 'whiskey.' These which I have just named are for the most part words of comparatively recent introduction. 'Bog,' 'glen,' 'kiln,' 'kibe,' 'mop,' 'mug,' 'mattock,' 'noggin,' with many more, how many is yet a very unsettled question, which at earlier dates found admission into our tongue, are derived from this same quarter.¹

Then too the New World has given us a certain number of words, Indian and other—'agouti' (Brazilian), 'anana' or 'ananas' (the same), 'buccaneer,' 'cacique' ('cassiqui,' in Raleigh's *Guiana*), 'caiman,' 'calumet,' 'canoe,' 'caribou,' 'catalpa,' 'caoutchouc' (South American), 'chocolate,' 'cocoa,' 'condor,'

¹ See Koch, *Hist. Gram. der Englischen Sprache*, vol. i. p. 4; and Morris, *English Accidence*, p. 253.

‘guano’ (Peruvian), ‘hamoc’ (‘hamaca’ in Raleigh), ‘hominy,’ ‘inca,’ ‘jaguar,’ ‘jalap,’ ‘lama,’ ‘maize’ (Haytian), ‘manitee,’ ‘mocassin,’ ‘mohawk,’ ‘opossum,’ ‘pampas,’ ‘pappoos,’ ‘pemmican,’ ‘pirogue,’ ‘potato’ (‘batata’ in our earlier voyagers), ‘puma’ (Peruvian), ‘raccoon,’ ‘sachem,’ ‘samp,’ ‘savannah’ (Haytian), ‘skunk,’ ‘squaw,’ ‘tapioca’ (Brazilian), ‘tobacco,’ ‘tomahawk,’ ‘tomata’ (Mexican), ‘wampum,’ ‘wigwam.’ If ‘hurricane’ was originally obtained from the Caribbean islanders,¹ it should be included in this list.

We may notice, finally, languages which have bestowed on us some single word, or two perhaps, or three. Thus ‘hussar,’ ‘uhlan,’ are Hungarian; ‘hetman,’ ‘polka,’ Polish; ‘drosky,’ ‘ukase,’ Russian; ‘vampire,’ Servian; ‘caloyer,’ Romaic; ‘mammoth,’ of some Siberian language; ‘taboo,’ ‘tattoo,’ Polynesian; ‘caviar,’ ‘steppe,’ Tartarian; ‘gingham,’ Javanese; while ‘assegai,’ ‘chimpanzee,’ ‘fetisch,’ ‘gnu,’ ‘kraal,’ ‘quagga,’ ‘zebra,’ belong to various African dialects; but ‘fetisch’ has reached us through the channel of the Portuguese.

Now I have no right to assume that any among those to whom I speak are equipped with that knowledge of other tongues, which shall enable them to detect at once the nationality of all or most of the words which they meet—some of these greatly disguised, and having undergone manifold transformations in the process of their adoption among us; but only that you have such helps at command in the shape of

¹ See Washington Irving, *Life and Voyages of Columbus*, D. viii. c. 9.

dictionaries and the like, and so much diligence in the use of these, as will enable you to trace out their birth and parentage. But possessing this much, I am confident to affirm that few studies will be more fruitful, will suggest more various matter of reflection, will more lead you into the secrets of the English tongue, than an analysis of passages drawn from different authors, such as I have just now proposed. Thus you will take some passage of English verse or prose—say the first ten lines of *Paradise Lost*—or the Lord's Prayer—or the 23rd Psalm; you will distribute the whole body of words which occur in that passage, of course not omitting the smallest, according to their nationalities—writing, it may be, A over every Anglo-Saxon word, L over every Latin, and so on with the others, should any other find room in the portion submitted to examination. This done, you will count up the *number* of those which each language contributes; again, you will note the *character* of the words derived from each quarter.

Yet here, before passing further, let me note that in dealing with Latin words it will be well also to mark whether they are directly from it, and such might be marked L¹, or only mediately, and to us directly from the French, which would be L², or Latin at second hand. A rule holds generally good, by which you may determine this. If a word be directly from the Latin, it will have undergone little or no modification in its form and shape, save only in the termination. 'Innocentia' will have become 'innocency,' 'natio' 'nation,' 'firmamentum' 'firmament,' but this will be all. On the other hand, if it comes *through* the French, it will have undergone a process of lubrica-

tion ; its sharply defined Latin outline will in good part have disappeared ; thus 'crown' is from 'corona,' but through 'couronne,' and itself a dissyllable, 'coroune,' in our earlier English ; 'treasure' is from 'thesaurus,' but through 'trésor ;' 'emperor' is the Latin 'imperator,' but it was first 'empereur.' It will often happen that the substantive has thus reached us through the intervention of the French ; while we have only felt at a later period our need of the adjective as well, which we have proceeded to borrow direct from the Latin. Thus 'people' is 'populus,' but it was 'peuple' first, while 'popular' is a direct transfer of a Latin vocable into our English glossary ; 'enemy' is 'inimicus,' but it was first softened in the French, and had its Latin physiognomy in good part obliterated, while 'inimical' is Latin throughout ; 'parish' is 'paroisse,' but 'parochial' is 'parochialis ;' 'chapter' is 'chapitre,' but 'capitular' is 'capitularis.'

Sometimes you will find a Latin word to have been twice adopted by us, and now making part of our vocabulary in two shapes ; 'doppelgänger' the Germans would call such. There is first the older word, which the French has given us ; but which, before it gave, it had fashioned and moulded ; clipping or contracting, it may be, by a syllable or more, for the French devours letters and syllables ; and there is the younger, borrowed at first hand from the Latin. Thus 'secure' and 'sure' are both from 'securus,' but one directly, the other through the French ; 'fidelity' and 'fealty,' both from 'fidelitas,' but one directly, the other at second hand ; 'species' and 'spice,' both from 'species,' spices being properly only *kinds* of aromatic drugs ; 'blaspheme' and 'blame,' both from 'blas-

phemare,¹ but 'blame,' immediately from 'blâmer.' Add to these 'granary' and 'garner;' 'captain' (capitaneus) and 'chieftain;' 'tradition' and 'treason;' 'rapine' and 'ravin;' 'abyss' and 'abysm;' 'phantasm' and 'phantom;' 'coffin' and 'coffer;' 'regal' and 'royal;' 'legal' and 'loyal;' 'cadence' and 'chance;' 'balsam' and 'balm;' 'hospital' and 'hotel;' 'digit' and 'doit;' 'pagan' and 'paynim;' 'captive' and 'caitiff;' 'persecute' and 'pursue;' 'aggravate' and 'aggrieve;' 'superficies' and 'surface;' 'sacristan' and 'sexton;' 'faction' and 'fashion;' 'secure' and 'sure;' 'particle' and 'parcel;' 'redemption' and 'ransom;' 'probe' and 'prove;' 'abbreviate' and 'abridge;' 'dormitory' and 'dortoir' or 'dorter' (this last now obsolete, but not uncommon in Jeremy Taylor); 'desiderate' and 'desire;' 'compute' and 'count;' 'fact' and 'feat;' 'esteem' and 'aim;' 'major' and 'mayor;' 'radius' and 'ray;' 'pauper' and 'poor;' 'potion' and 'poison;' 'ration' and 'reason;' 'oration' and 'orison;' 'penitence' and 'penance;' 'zealous' and 'jealous;' 'respect' and 'respite;' 'fragile' and 'frail;' 'calix' and 'chalice;' 'fabric' and 'forge;' 'quiet' and 'coy;' 'tract,' 'treat,' and 'trait.'² I have in the

¹ This particular instance of 'dimorphism' as Latham calls it, 'dittology' as Heyse, recurs in Italian, 'bestemmiare' and 'biasimare;' and in Spanish, 'blasfemar' and 'lastimar.'

² Somewhat different from this, yet itself also curious, is the passing of an Anglo-Saxon word in two different forms into English, and now current in both; thus 'drag' and 'draw;' 'desk' and 'dish,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'disc,' the German 'tisch;' 'beech' and 'book,' both the Anglo-Saxon 'boc,' our first books being *beechen* tablets (see Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. vv. 'buch,' 'buche'); 'girdle' and 'kirtle,' the German 'gürtel;' already in Anglo-Saxon a double spelling, 'gyrdel,' 'cyrtel,'

instancings of these, named always the Latin form before the French ; but the reverse has been no doubt in every instance the order in which the words were adopted by us ; we had 'pursue' before 'persecute,' 'spice' before 'species ;' 'royalty' before 'regality,' and so with the others.¹

The explanation of this more thorough change which the earlier form has undergone, is not far to

had prepared for the double words ; so too 'shell,' 'shale,' and 'scale ;' 'skiff' and 'ship ;' 'tenth' and 'tithe ;' 'shirt' and 'skirt ;' 'school,' 'scull,' and 'shoal ;' 'glass' and 'glaze ;' 'swallow' and 'swill ;' 'wine' and 'vine ;' 'why' and 'how ;' 'kill' and 'quell ;' 'beacon' and 'beckon ;' 'flesh' and 'flitch ;' 'black' and 'bleak ;' 'pond' and 'pound ;' 'whit' and 'wight ;' 'deck' and 'thatch ;' 'deal' and 'dole ;' 'weald' and 'wood ;' 'dew' and 'thaw ;' 'wayward' and 'awkward ;' 'dune' and 'down ;' 'hood' and 'hat ;' 'evil' and 'ill ;' 'hedge' and 'hay ;' 'waggon' and 'wain ;' 'heathen' and 'hoyden ;' 'ant' and 'emmet ;' 'spray' and 'sprig ;' 'thew' and 'thigh ;' 'bow' and 'bay,' as in *bay* window. We have, let me add, another form of double adoption. In several instances we possess the same word, first in its more proper Teutonic shape, and secondly, as the Normans, having found it in France and made it their own, brought it with them here. Thus 'wise' and 'guise ;' 'wed,' 'wage,' and 'gage ;' 'wile' and 'guile ;' 'warden' and 'guardian ;' 'warranty' and 'guarantee.'

¹ We have double adoptions from the Greek ; one direct, one modified in passing through some other language ; thus, 'adamant' and 'diamond ;' 'monastery' and 'minster ;' 'paralysis' and 'palsy ;' 'scandal' and 'slander ;' 'theriac' and 'treacle ;' 'asphodel' and 'daffodil,' or 'affodil' (see the *Promptorium*), as it used to be ; 'presbyter' and 'priest ;' 'dactyl' and 'date,' the fruit so called deriving its name from its likeness to a 'dactyl' or finger ; in Bacon it is still known as a 'dactyl ;' 'cathedral' and 'chair.' 'Cypher' and 'zero,' I may add, are different adoptions of one and the same Arabic word.

seek. Words introduced into a language at a period when as yet writing is rare, and books are few or none, when therefore orthography is unfixed, or being purely phonetic, cannot properly be said to exist at all, have for a long time no other life save that which they live upon the lips of men. The checks therefore to alterations in the form of a word which a written, and still more which a printed, literature imposes are wanting, and thus we find words out of number altogether reshaped and remoulded by the people who have adopted them, so entirely assimilated to *their* language in form and termination, as in the end to be almost or quite undistinguishable from natives. On the other hand, a most effectual check to this process, a process sometimes barbarizing and defacing, even while it is the only one which will make the newly brought in entirely homogeneous with the old and already existing, is imposed by the existence of a much written language and a full-formed literature. The foreign word, being once adopted into these, can no longer undergo a thorough transformation. Generally the utmost which use and familiarity can do with it now, is to cause the gradual dropping of the foreign termination: not that this is unimportant; it often goes far to make a home for a word, and to hinder it from wearing any longer the appearance of a stranger and intruder.¹

¹ The French language in like manner 'teems with Latin words which under various disguises obtained repeated admittance into its dictionary,' with a double adoption, one popular and reaching back to the earliest times of the language, the other belonging to a later and more literary period, 'demotic' and 'scholastic' they have been severally called; on which subject see Génin,

But to return from this digression. I said just now that you would learn much from making an inventory

Récréations Philologiques, vol. i. pp. 162–166 ; Littré, *Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. i. pp. 241–244 ; Fuchs, *Die Roman. Sprachen*, p. 125 ; Mahn, *Etymol. Forschung.* pp. 19, 46, and passim ; Pellissier, *La Langue Française*, p. 205. Thus from ‘separare’ is derived ‘sevrer,’ to separate the child from its mother’s breast, to wean, but also ‘séparer,’ without this special sense ; from ‘pastor,’ ‘pâtre,’ a shepherd in the literal, and ‘pasteur’ the same in a tropical, sense ; from ‘catena,’ ‘chaîne’ and ‘cadène ;’ from ‘fragilis,’ ‘frêle’ and ‘fragile ;’ from ‘pensare,’ ‘peser’ and ‘penser ;’ from ‘gehenna,’ ‘gêne’ and ‘géhénne ;’ from ‘captivus,’ ‘caitif,’ ‘chétif,’ and ‘captif ;’ from ‘nativus,’ ‘naïf’ and ‘natif ;’ from ‘immutabilis,’ ‘immutable’ and ‘immuable ;’ from ‘designare,’ ‘dessiner’ and ‘désigner ;’ from ‘decimare,’ ‘dîmer’ and ‘décimer ;’ from ‘consumere,’ ‘consommer’ and ‘consumer ;’ from ‘simulare,’ ‘sembler’ and ‘simuler ;’ from ‘sollicitare,’ ‘soucier’ and ‘solliciter ;’ from ‘adamas,’ ‘aimant’ (lodestone) and ‘adamant ;’ from the low Latin ‘disjejunare,’ ‘dîner’ and ‘déjeûner ;’ from ‘acceptare,’ ‘acheter’ and ‘accepter ;’ from ‘homo,’ ‘on’ and ‘homme ;’ from ‘paganus,’ ‘payen’ and ‘paysan ;’ from ‘obedientia,’ ‘obéissance’ and ‘obédience ;’ from ‘monasterium,’ ‘moûtier’ and ‘monastère ;’ from ‘strictus,’ ‘étroit’ and ‘strict ;’ from ‘scintilla,’ ‘étincelle’ and ‘scintille ;’ from ‘sacramentum,’ ‘serment’ and ‘sacrement ;’ from ‘ministerium,’ ‘métier’ and ‘ministère ;’ from ‘parabola,’ ‘parole’ and ‘parabole ;’ from ‘natalis,’ ‘Noël’ and ‘natal ;’ from ‘rigidus,’ ‘raide’ and ‘rigide ;’ from ‘sapidus,’ ‘sade’ and ‘sapide ;’ from ‘peregrinus,’ ‘pèlerin’ and ‘pérégrin ;’ from ‘factio,’ ‘façon’ and ‘faction,’ and it has now adopted ‘factio’ in a third shape, that is, in our English ‘fashion ;’ from ‘pietas,’ ‘pitié’ and ‘piété ;’ from ‘paradisus,’ ‘parvis’ and ‘paradis ;’ from ‘capitulum,’ ‘chapitre’ and ‘capitule,’ a botanical term ; from ‘causa,’ ‘chose’ and ‘cause ;’ from ‘movere,’ ‘muer’ and ‘mouvoir ;’ from ‘ponere,’ ‘poser’ and ‘pondre ;’ from ‘vigilia,’ ‘veille’ and ‘vigile ;’ from ‘scandalum,’ ‘esclandre’ and ‘scandale ;’ from ‘ligare,’ ‘lier’ and ‘liguer ;’ while ‘attacher’ and ‘attaquer’ only differ in pro-

of the words of one descent and those of another occurring in any passage which you analyse; and noting the proportion which they bear to one another. Thus analyse the diction of the Lord's Prayer. Of the seventy words whereof it consists only the following six claim the rights of Latin citizenship—the noun 'trespasses,' the verb 'trespass,' 'temptation,' 'deliver,' 'power,' 'glory.' Nor would it be very difficult to substitute for any one of these a Saxon word. Thus for 'trespasses' might be substituted 'sins;' for 'trespass' 'sin;' for 'deliver' 'free;' for 'power' 'might;' for 'glory' 'brightness;' which would only leave 'temptation' about which there could be the slightest difficulty; and 'trials,' though now employed in a somewhat different sense, would exactly correspond to it. This is but a small percentage, six words in seventy, or less than ten in the hundred; and we often light upon a still smaller proportion. Thus take the first three verses of the 23rd Psalm:—'The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I lack nothing; He shall feed me in a green *pasture*, and lead me forth beside the waters of *comfort*; He shall *convert* my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.' Here are forty-five words, and only the three in italics are Latin; for each of which it would be easy to substitute one of home growth; little more, that is, than the proportion of seven in the hundred; while in five verses out of Genesis, containing one hundred and thirty words, there are only

nunciation. So, too, in Italian we have 'manco,' maimed, and 'monco,' maimed *of a hand*; 'rifutare,' to refute,' and 'rifiutare,' to refuse; 'dama' and 'donna,' both forms of 'domina.'

five not Saxon,—less, that is, than four in the hundred ; and, more notably still, the first four verses of St. John's Gospel, in all fifty-four words, have no single word that is not Saxon.

Shall we therefore conclude that these are the proportions in which the Anglo-Saxon and Latin elements of the language stand to one another? If they are so, then my former proposal to express their relations by sixty and thirty was greatly at fault ; and seventy to twenty, or even eighty to ten, would fall short of adequately representing the real predominance of the Saxon over the Latin element in the language. But it is not so ; the Anglo-Saxon words by no means outnumber the Latin in the degree which the analysis of those passages would seem to imply. It is not that there are so many more Anglo-Saxon words, but that the words which there are, being words of more primary necessity, do therefore so much more frequently recur. The proportions which the analysis of the *dictionary*, that is, of the language *at rest*, would furnish, are very different from those instanced just now, and which the analysis of *sentences*, or of the language *in motion*, gives. Thus if we analyse by aid of a *Concordance* the total vocabulary of the English Bible, not more than sixty per cent of the words are native ; but in the actual translation the native words are from ninety per cent in some passages to ninety-six in others.¹ The proportion in

¹ See Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, Engl. ed., p. 88, *sqq.*

It is curious to note how very small a part of the language writers who wield the fullest command over its resources, and who, from the breadth and variety of the subjects which they

Shakespeare's vocabulary of native words to foreign is much the same as in the English Bible, that is, about sixty to forty in every hundred ; while an analysis of various plays gives a proportion of from eighty-eight to ninety-one per cent of native among those in actual employment. Milton gives results more remarkable still. We gather from a *Concordance* that only thirty-three per cent of the words employed by him in his poetical works are of Anglo-Saxon origin ; while an analysis of a book of *Paradise Lost* yields eighty per cent of such, and of *L'Allegro* ninety. Indeed a vast multitude of his Latin words are employed by him only on a single occasion.

The notice of this fact will lead us to some important conclusions as to the *character* of the words which the Saxon and the Latin severally furnish ; and principally to this :—that while English is thus compact in the main of these two elements, their contributions are of very different characters and kinds. The Anglo-Saxon is not so much what I have just called it, one element of the English language, as the basis of it. All the joints, the whole *articulation*, the sinews and ligaments, the great body of articles, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, numerals, auxiliary

treat, would be likely to claim its help in the most various directions, call into active employment. Set the words in the English language at the lowest, and they can scarcely be set lower than sixty thousand ; and it is certainly surprizing to learn that in our English Bible somewhat less than a tenth of these, about six thousand, are all that are actually employed, that Milton in his poetry has not used more than eight thousand words, nor Shakespeare, with all the immense range of subjects over which he travels, more than fifteen thousand.

verbs, all smaller words which serve to knit together and bind the larger into sentences, these, not to speak of the grammatical structure, are Saxon. The Latin may contribute its tale of bricks, yea, of goodly stones, hewn and polished, to the spiritual building; but the mortar, with all which binds the different parts of it together, and constitutes them a house, is Saxon throughout. Selden in his *Table Talk* uses another comparison; but to the same effect: 'If you look upon the language spoken in the Saxon time, and the language spoken now, you will find the difference to be just as if a man had a cloak which he wore plain in Queen Elizabeth's days, and since, here has put in a piece of red, and there a piece of blue, and here a piece of green, and there a piece of orange-tawny. We borrow words from the French, Italian, Latin, as every pedantic man pleases.' Whewell sets forth the same fact under another image: 'Though our comparison might be bold, it would be just if we were to say that the English language is a conglomerate of Latin words bound together in a Saxon cement; the fragments of the Latin being partly portions introduced directly from the parent quarry, with all their sharp edges, and partly pebbles of the same material, obscured and shaped by long rolling in a Norman or some other channel.'

This same law holds good in all composite languages; which, composite as they are, yet are only such in the matter of their vocabulary. There may be a motley company of words, some coming from one quarter, some from another; but there is never a medley of grammatical forms and inflections. One or other language entirely predominates here, and

everything has to conform and subordinate itself to the laws of this ruling and ascendant language. The Anglo-Saxon is the ruling language in our present English. This having thought good to drop its genders, the French substantives which come among us must in like manner leave theirs behind them ; so too the verbs must renounce their own conjugations, and adapt themselves to ours.¹ ‘The Latin and the French deranged the vocabulary of our language, but never its form or structure.’² A remarkable parallel to this might be found in the language of Persia, since the conquest of that country by the Arabs. The ancient Persian religion fell with the government, but the language remained totally unaffected by the revolution, and in its grammatical structure and organization forfeited nothing of its Indo-germanic character. Arabic vocables, the only exotic words found in Persian, are found in numbers varying with the object and quality, style and taste of the writers, but pages of pure idiomatic Persian may be written without employing a single word from the Arabic.

¹ W. Schlegel (*Indische Bibliothek*, vol. i. p. 284): Coëunt quidem paullatim in novum corpus peregrina vocabula, sed grammatica linguarum, unde petitæ sunt, ratio perit.

² Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 108. ‘Languages,’ says Max Müller, ‘though mixed in their dictionaries, can never be mixed in their grammar. In the English dictionary the student of the science of language can detect by his own tests Celtic, Norman, Greek, and Latin ingredients ; but not a single drop of foreign blood has entered into the organic system of the English language. The grammar, the blood and soul of the language, is as pure and unmixed in English as spoken in the British Isles, as it was when spoken on the shores of the German Ocean by the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes of the Continent.’

At the same time the secondary or superinduced language, though powerless to force its forms on the language which receives its words, may yet compel that other to renounce a portion of its own forms, by the impossibility which is practically found to exist of making these fit the new-comers ; and thus it may exert, although not a positive, yet a negative, influence on the grammar of the other tongue. It has proved so with us. ' When the English language was inundated by a vast influx of French words, few, if any, French forms were received into its grammar ; but the Saxon forms soon dropped away, because they did not suit the new roots ; and the genius of the language, from having to deal with the newly imported words in a rude state, was induced to neglect the inflections of the native ones. This, for instance, led to the introduction of the *s* as the universal termination of all plural nouns, which agreed with the usage of the French language, and was not alien from that of the Saxon, but was merely an extension of the termination of the ancient masculine to other classes of nouns.'¹

If you wish to make actual proof of the fact just now asserted, namely, that the radical constitution of the language is Saxon, try to compose a sentence, let it be only of ten or a dozen words, and the subject entirely of your own choice, employing therein none but words of a Latin derivation. You will find it impossible, or next to impossible, to do this. Whichever way you turn, some obstacle will meet you in the face. There are large words in plenty, but no binding power ; the mortar which should fill up the

¹ J. Grimm, quoted in *The Philological Museum*, vol. i. p. 667.

interstices, and which is absolutely necessary for the holding together of the building, is absent altogether. On the other side, whole pages might be written, not perhaps on higher or abstruser themes, but on familiar matters of every-day life, in which every word should be of Saxon descent; and these, pages from which, with the exercise of a little patience and ingenuity, all appearance of awkwardness should be excluded, so that none would know, unless otherwise informed, that the writer had submitted himself to this restraint and limitation, and was drawing his words exclusively from one section of the English language. Sir Thomas Browne has given several long paragraphs so constructed. Here is a little fragment of one of them: 'The first and foremost step to all good works is the dread and fear of the Lord of heaven and earth, which through the Holy Ghost enlighteneth the blindness of our sinful hearts to tread the ways of wisdom, and lead our feet into the land of blessing.'¹ This is not stiffer than the ordinary English of his time.²

¹ *Works*, vol. iv. p. 202.

² What Ampère says of Latin as constituting the base of the French (*Formation de la Langue Française*, p. 196), we may say of Anglo-Saxon as constituting the base of English: Il ne s'agit pas ici d'un nombre plus ou moins grand de mots fournis à notre langue; il s'agit de son fondement et de sa substance. Il y a en français, nous le verrons, des mots celtiques et germaniques; mais le français est une langue *latine*. Les mots celtiques y sont restés, les mots germaniques y sont venus; les mots latins n'y sont point restés, et n'y sont point venus; ils sont la langue elle-même, ils la constituent. Il ne peut donc être question de rechercher quels sont les éléments latins du français. Ce que j'aurai à faire, ce sera d'indiquer ceux qui ne

But because it is thus possible to write English, forgoing altogether the use of the Latin portion of the language, you must not therefore conclude this latter portion to be of little value, or that we should be as rich without it as with it. We should be very far indeed from so being. I urge this, because we hear sometimes regrets expressed that we have not kept our language more free from the admixture of Latin, and suggestions made that we should even now endeavour to restrain our employment of this within the narrowest possible limits. I remember Lord Brougham urging upon the students at Glasgow that they should do their best to rid their diction of long-tailed words in 'osity' and 'ation.' Now, doubtless, there was sufficient ground and warrant for the warning against such which he gave them. Writers of a former age, Samuel Johnson in the last century, Henry More and Sir Thomas Browne in the century preceding, gave beyond all question undue preponderance to the learned, or Latin, element in our language; and there have never wanted those who have trod in their footsteps; while yet it is certain that

le sont pas. Koch, in some words prefixed to his *Historic Grammar of the English Language*, has put all this in a lively manner. Having spoken of the larger or smaller contingents to the army of English words which the various languages have furnished, he proceeds: Die Hauptarmee, besonders das Volkheer, ist deutsch, ein grosses französisches Hilfs- und Luxuscorps hat sich angeschlossen, die andern Romanen sind nur durch wenige Ueberläufer vertreten, und sie haben ihre nationale Eigenthümlichkeit seltener bewahrt. Ein stärkeres Corps stellt das Lateinische; es hat Truppen stossen lassen zum Angelsächsischen, zum Alt- und Mittelenglischen, und sogar noch zum Neuenglischen.

very much of the homely strength and beauty of English, of its most popular and happiest idioms, would have perished from it, had they succeeded in persuading the great body of English writers to write as they had written.

But for all this we could *almost* as ill spare this Latin portion of the language as the other. Philosophy and science and the arts of an advanced civilization find their utterance in the Latin words which we have made our own, or, if not in them, then in the Greek, which for present purposes may be grouped with them. Granting too that, all other things being equal, when a Latin and a Saxon word offer themselves to our choice, we shall generally do best to employ the Saxon, to speak of 'happiness' rather than 'felicity,' 'almighty' rather than 'omnipotent,' a 'forerunner' rather than a 'precursor,' a 'forefather' than a 'progenitor,' still these latter are as truly denizens in the language as the former; no alien interlopers, but possessing the rights of citizenship as fully as the most Saxon word of them all. One part of the language is not to be unduly favoured at the expense of the other; the Saxon at the cost of the Latin, as little as the Latin at the cost of the Saxon. 'Both,' as De Quincey, himself a foremost master of English, has well said, 'are indispensable; and speaking generally, without stopping to distinguish as to subject, both are *equally* indispensable. Pathos, in situations which are homely, or at all connected with domestic affections, naturally moves by Saxon words. Lyrical emotion of every kind, which (to merit the name of *lyrical*) must be in the state of flux and reflux, or, generally, of agitation, also requires the Saxon element

of our language. And why? Because the Saxon is the aboriginal element; the basis and not the superstructure: consequently it comprehends all the ideas which are natural to the heart of man and to the elementary situations of life. And although the Latin often furnishes us with duplicates of these ideas, yet the Saxon, or monosyllabic part, has the advantage of precedence in our use and knowledge; for it is the language of the nursery whether for rich or poor, in which great philological academy no toleration is given to words in "osity" or "ation." There is therefore a great advantage, as regards the consecration to our feelings, settled by usage and custom upon the Saxon strands in the mixed yarn of our native tongue. And universally, this may be remarked—that wherever the passion of a poem is of that sort which *uses, presumes, or postulates* the ideas, without seeking to extend them, Saxon will be the "cocoon" (to speak by the language applied to silk-worms), which the poem spins for itself. But, on the other hand, where the motion of the feeling is *by* and *through* the ideas, where (as in religious or meditative poetry—Young's for instance, or Cowper's), the pathos creeps and kindles underneath the very tissues of the thinking, there the Latin will predominate; and so much so that, whilst the flesh, the blood, and the muscle will be often almost exclusively Latin, the articulations only, or hinges of connection, will be Anglo-Saxon.' On this same matter Sir Francis Palgrave has expressed himself thus: 'Upon the languages of Teutonic origin the Latin has exercised great influence, but most energetically on our own. The very early admixture of the *Langue d'Oil*, the never interrupted employment

of the French as the language of education, and the nomenclature created by the scientific and literary cultivation of advancing and civilized society, have Romanized our speech; the warp may be Anglo-Saxon, but the woof is Roman as well as the embroidery, and these foreign materials have so entered into the texture, that, were they plucked out, the web would be torn to rags, unravelled and destroyed.'¹

We shall nowhere find a happier example of the preservation of the golden mean than in our Authorized Version of the Bible. Among the minor and secondary blessings conferred by that Version on the nations drawing their spiritual life from it,—a blessing only small by comparison with the infinitely greater blessings whereof it is the vehicle to them,—is the happy wisdom, the instinctive tact, with which its authors have kept clear in this matter from all exaggeration. There has not been on their parts any futile and mischievous attempt to ignore the full rights of the Latin element of the language on the one side, nor on the other any burdening of the Version with so many learned Latin terms as should cause it to forfeit its homely character, and shut up large portions of it from the understanding of plain and unlearned men. One of the most eminent among those who in our own times abandoned the communion of the English Church for that of the Church of Rome has expressed in deeply touching tones his sense of all which, in renouncing our Translation, he felt himself to have forgone and lost. These are his words: 'Who will

¹ *History of Normandy and England*, vol. i. p. 78.

not say that the uncommon beauty and marvellous English of the Protestant Bible is not one of the great strongholds of heresy in this country? It lives on the ear, like a music that can never be forgotten, like the sound of church bells, which the convert hardly knows how he can forego. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than mere words. It is part of the national mind, and the anchor of national seriousness. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the griefs and trials of a man is hidden beneath its words. It is the representative of his best moments, and all that there has been about him of soft and gentle and pure and penitent and good speaks to him for ever out of his English Bible. It is his sacred thing, which doubt has never dimmed, and controversy never soiled. In the length and breadth of the land there is not a Protestant with one spark of religiousness about him, whose spiritual biography is not in his Saxon Bible.' ¹

Certainly one has only to compare this Version of ours with the Rhemish, at once to understand why he should have thus given the palm and preference to ours. I urge not here the fact that one translation is from the original Greek, the other from the Latin Vulgate, and thus the translation of a translation, often reproducing the mistakes of that translation; but, putting all such higher advantages aside, only the

¹ In some earlier editions of this book I used language which seemed to ascribe these words to Dr. Newman, whose I supposed they were. They indeed occur in an Essay by the late Dr. Faber on '*The Characteristics of the Lives of the Saints*,' prefixed to a *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, p. 116.

superiority of the diction in which the meaning, be it correct or incorrect, is conveyed to English readers. Thus I open the Rhemish Version at Galatians v. 19, where the long list of the 'works of the flesh,' and of the 'fruit of the Spirit,' is given. But what could a mere English reader make of terms such as these—'impudicity,' 'ebrieties,' 'comessations,' 'longanimity,' all which occur in that passage? while our Version for 'ebrieties' has 'drunkenness,' for 'comessations' has 'revellings,' for 'longanimity' 'long-suffering.' Or set over against one another such phrases as these,—in the Rhemish, 'the exemplars of the celestials' (Heb. ix. 23), but in ours, 'the patterns of things in the heavens.' Or suppose if, instead of what *we* read at Heb. xiii. 16, 'To do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased,' we read as in the Rhemish, 'Beneficence and communication do not forget; for with such hosts God is promerited'!—Who does not feel that if our Version had been composed in such Latin-English as this, had been fulfilled with words like these—'odible,' 'suasible,' 'exinanite,' 'contristate,' 'postulations,' 'coinquinations,' 'agnition,' 'zealatour,' 'donary,'—which all, with many more of the same mint, are found in the Rhemish Version,—our loss would have been great and enduring, such as would have been felt through the whole religious life of our people, in the very depths of the national mind?¹

There was indeed something deeper than love of sound and genuine English at work in our Translators,

¹ There is more on this matter in my book, *On the Authorized Version of the New Testament*, pp. 32-35.

whether they were conscious of it or not, which hindered them from presenting the Scriptures to their fellow-countrymen dressed out in such a semi-Latin garb as this. The Reformation, which they were in this translation so effectually setting forward, was just a throwing off, on the part of the Teutonic nations, of that everlasting pupilage in which Rome would fain have held them; an assertion at length that they were come to full age, and that not through her, but directly through Christ, they would address themselves unto God. The use of Latin as the language of worship, as the language in which alone the Scriptures might be read, had been the great badge of servitude, even as the Latin habits of thought and feeling which it promoted had been most important helps to the continuance of this servitude, through long ages. It lay deep then in the essential conditions of the conflict which they were maintaining, that the Reformers should develope the Saxon, or essentially national, element in the language; while it was just as natural that the Roman Catholic translators, if they must render the Scriptures into English at all, should yet render them into such English as should bear the nearest possible resemblance to that Latin Vulgate, which Rome, with a wisdom that in such matters has never failed her, would gladly have seen as the only version of the Book in the hands of the faithful.¹

¹ Where the word itself which the Rhemish translators employ is a perfectly good one, it is yet instructive to observe how often they draw on the Latin portion of the language, where we have drawn on the Saxon,—thus ‘corporal’ where we have ‘bodily’ (1 Tim. iv. 8), ‘irreprehensible’ (1 Tim. iii. 2) where we have ‘blameless,’ ‘coadjutor’ where we have ‘fellow-worker’ (Col.

Let me again, however, recur to the fact that what our Reformers did in this matter, they did without exaggeration; even as they have shown the same wise moderation in matters higher than this. They gave to the Latin element of the language its rights, though they would not suffer it to encroach upon and usurp those of the other. It would be difficult not to believe, even if many outward signs did not suggest the same, that there is an important part in the future for that one language of Europe to play, which thus serves as connecting link between the North and the South, between the languages spoken by the Teutonic nations of the North and by the Romance nations of the South; which holds on to and partakes of both; which is as a middle term between them.¹ There are who venture to hope that the English Church, having in like manner two aspects, looking on the one side toward Rome, being herself truly Catholic, looking on the other toward the Protestant communions, being herself also protesting and reformed, may have reserved for her in the providence of God an important

iv. 11), 'prescience' where we have 'foreknowledge' (Acts ii. 23), 'dominator' where we have 'Lord' (Jude 4), 'cogitation' where we have 'thought' (Luke ix. 46), 'fraternity' where we have 'brotherhood' (1 Pet. ii. 17), 'senior' where we have 'elder' (Rev. vii. 13), 'supererogate' where we have 'spend more' (Luke x. 35), 'exprobrate' where we have 'upbraid' (Mark xvi. 14), 'prohibit' where we have 'forbid' (2 Pet. ii. 16), 'incontinent' (Mark ix. 24) where we have 'straightway,' 'stipends' (Luke iii. 14) where we have 'wages.'

¹ See a paper, *On the Probable Future Position of the English Language*, by T. Watts, Esq., in the *Proceedings of the Philological Society*, vol. iv. p. 207; and compare the concluding words in Guest's *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 429.

share in that reconciling of a divided Christendom, whereof we are bound not to despair. And if this ever should be so, if, notwithstanding our sins and unworthiness, so blessed an office should be in store for her, it will be no small assistance to this, that the language in which her mediation will be effected is one wherein both parties may claim their own, in which neither will feel that it is receiving the adjudication of a stranger, of one who must be an alien from its deeper thoughts and habits, because an alien from its words, but a language in which both must recognize very much of that which is deepest and most precious of their own.¹

Nor is this prerogative which I have just claimed for our English the mere dream and fancy of patriotic vanity. The scholar most profoundly acquainted with the great group of the Teutonic languages in Europe, a devoted lover, if ever there was such, of his native German, I mean Jacob Grimm, has expressed himself very nearly to the same effect, and given the palm over all to our English in words which you will not grudge to hear quoted, and with which I shall bring this lecture to a close. After ascribing to our language ‘a veritable power of expression, such as perhaps

¹ Fowler (*English Grammar*, p. 135): ‘The English is a medium language, and thus adapted to diffusion. In the Gothic family it stands midway between the Teutonic and the Scandinavian branches, touching both, and to some extent reaching into both. A German or a Dane finds much in the English which exists in his own language. It unites by certain bonds of consanguinity, as no other language does, the Romanic with the Gothic languages. An Italian or a Frenchman finds a large class of words in the English which exist in his own language, though the basis of the English is Gothic.’

never stood at the command of any other language of men,' he goes on to say, 'Its highly spiritual genius, and wonderfully happy development and condition, have been the result of a surprisingly intimate union of the two noblest languages in modern Europe, the Teutonic and the Romance.—It is well known in what relation these two stand to one another in the English tongue; the former supplying in far larger proportion the material groundwork, the latter the spiritual conceptions. In truth the English language, which by no mere accident has produced and upborne the greatest and most predominant poet of modern times, as distinguished from the ancient classical poetry (I can, of course, only mean Shakespeare), may with all right be called a world-language; and, like the English people, appears destined hereafter to prevail with a sway more extensive even than its present over all the portions of the globe.¹ For in wealth, good

¹ A little more than two centuries ago a poet, himself abundantly deserving the title of 'well-languaged,' which a contemporary or near successor gave him, ventured in some remarkable lines timidly to anticipate this. Speaking of his native English, which he himself wrote with such vigour and purity, though deficient in the passion and fiery impulses which go to the making of a first-rate poet, Daniel exclaims:

'And who, in time, knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue? to what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
To enrich unknowing nations with our stores?
What worlds in the yet unformèd Occident
May come refined with the accents that are ours?
Or who can tell for what great work in hand
The greatness of our style is now ordained?

sense, and closeness of structure no other of the languages at this day spoken deserves to be compared with it—not even our German, which is torn, even as we are torn, and must first rid itself of many defects, before it can enter boldly into the lists, as a competitor with the English.’¹

What powers it shall bring in, what spirits command,
 What thoughts let out, what humours keep restrained,
 What mischief it may powerfully withstand,
 And what fair ends may thereby be attained?’

¹ *Ueber den Ursprung der Sprache*, Berlin, 1832, p. 50.
 Compare Philarète Chasles, *Études sur l'Allemagne*, pp. 12–33.

LECTURE II.

ENGLISH AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

WE have seen that many who have best right to speak are strong to maintain that English has gained far more than it has lost by that violent interruption of its orderly development which the Norman Conquest brought with it, that it has been permanently enriched by that immense irruption and settlement of foreign words within its borders, which followed, though not immediately, on that catastrophe. But there here suggests itself to us an interesting and not uninteresting subject of speculation; what, namely, this language would actually now be, if there had been no Battle of Hastings; or a Battle of Hastings which William had lost and Harold won. When I invite you to consider this, you will understand me to exclude any similar catastrophe, which should in the same way have issued in the setting up of an intrusive dynasty, supported by the arms of a foreign soldiery, and speaking a Romanic as distinguished from a Teutonic language, on the throne of England. I lay a stress upon this last point—a people speaking a Romanic language; inasmuch as the effects upon the language spoken in England would have been quite different, would have fallen far short of those which actually found place, if the great Canute had succeeded in founding a Danish, or Harold Hardrada a Norwegian, dynasty in England

—Danish and Norwegian both being dialects of the same Gothic language which was already spoken here. Some differences in the language now spoken by Englishmen, such issues,—and one and the other were at different times well within the range of possibility,—would have entailed ; but differences inconsiderable by the side of those which have followed the coming in of a conquering and ruling race speaking one of the tongues directly formed upon the Latin.

This which I suggest is only one branch of a far larger speculation. It would be no uninteresting task if one thoroughly versed in the whole constitutional lore of England, acquainted as a Palgrave was with Anglo-Saxon England, able to look into the seeds of things and to discern which of these contained the germs of future development, which would grow and which would not, should interpret to us by the spirit of historic divination, what, if there had been no successful Norman invasion, would be now the social and political institutions of England, what the relations of the different ranks of society to one another, what the division and tenure of land, what amount of liberty at home, of greatness abroad, England would at this day have achieved. It is only on one branch of this subject that I propose to enter at all.

It may indeed appear to some that even in this I am putting before them problems which are in their very nature impossible to solve, which it is therefore unprofitable to entertain ; since dealing, as here we must, with what might have been, not with what actually has been or is, all must be mere guesswork for us ; and, however ingenious our guesses, we can never test them by the touchstone of actual fact, and

so estimate their real worth. Such an objection would rest on a mistake, though a very natural one. I am persuaded we *can* know to a very large extent how, under such conditions as I have supposed, it would have fared with our tongue, what the English would be like which, in such a case, the dwellers in this island would be speaking at this day. The laws which preside over the development of language are so fixed and immutable, and capricious as they may seem, there is really so little caprice in them, that if we can at all trace the course which other kindred dialects have followed under such conditions as English would then have been submitted to, we may thus arrive at very confident conclusions as to the road which English would have travelled. And there *are* such languages ; more or less the whole group of Teutonic languages are such. Studying any one of these, and the most obvious of these to study would be the German, we may learn very much of the forms which English would now wear, if the tremendous shock of one ever-memorable day had not changed so much in this land, and made England and English both so different from what otherwise they would have been.

At the same time I would not have you set *too* high the similarity which would have existed between the English and other languages of the Teutonic family, even if no such huge catastrophe as that had mixed so many new elements in the one which are altogether foreign to the other. There are *always* forces at work among tribes and people which have parted company, one portion of them, as in this instance, going forth to new seats, while the other tarried in the old ; or both of them travelling onward, and separating more and

more from one another, as in the case of those whom we know as Greeks and Italians, who, going forth from those Illyrian highlands where they once dwelt together, occupied each a peninsula of its own ; or, again, as between those who, like the Britons of Wales and of Cornwall, have been violently thrust asunder and separated from one another by the intrusion of a hostile people, like a wedge, between them ; there are, I say, forces widening slowly but surely the breach between the languages spoken by the one section of the divided people and by the other, multiplying the points of diversity between the speech of those to whom even dialectic differences may once have been unknown. This, that they should travel daily further from one another, comes to pass quite independently of any such sudden and immense revolution as that of which we have been just speaking. If there had been no Norman Conquest, nor any event similar to it, it is yet quite certain that English would be now a very different language from any at the present day spoken in Germany or in Holland. Different of course it would be from that purely conventional language, now recognized in Germany as the only language of literature ; but very different too from any dialect of that Low German, still popularly spoken on the Frisian coast and lower banks of the Elbe, to which no doubt it would have borne a far closer resemblance. It was indeed already very different when that catastrophe arrived. The six hundred years which, on the briefest reckoning, had elapsed since the Saxon immigration to these shores—that immigration having probably begun very much earlier—had in this matter, as in others, left their mark.

I will very briefly enumerate some of the dissimilating forces, moral and material, by the action of which those who, so long as they dwelt together, possessed the same language, little by little become barbarians to one another.

One branch of the speakers of a language engrafts on the old stock numerous words which the other does not ; and this from various causes. It does so by intercourse with new races, into contact and connection with which it, but not the other branch of the divided family, has been brought. Thus in quite recent times, South African English, spoken in the presence of a large Dutch population at the Cape, has acquired such words as 'to treck,' 'to inspan,' 'to outspan,' 'spoor,' 'springbok,' 'wildbeest,' 'roer' (the German 'rohr'), 'boor,' in the sense of farmer, of which our English at home knows nothing. So too the great English colony in India has acquired 'ayah,' 'bungalow,' 'coolie,' 'durbar,' 'loot,' 'nabob,' 'nautch,' 'nullah,' 'rupee,' 'tulwar,' 'zemindar,' 'zenana,' with many more. It is true that we too at home have adopted some of these, and understand them all. But suppose there were little or no communication between us at home and our colony in India, no passing from the one to the other, no literature common to both, here are the beginnings of what would grow in lapse of years to an important element of diversity between the English of England and of India. Or take another example. The English-speaking race in America has encountered races which we do not encounter here, has been brought into relation with aspects of nature which are quite foreign to Englishmen. For most of these they have adopted

the words which they had found ready made to their hands by those who occupied the land before them, or still occupy it side by side with themselves; they have borrowed, for example, 'pampas' and 'savannah' from the Indian; 'bayou,' 'cache,' 'crevasse,' 'chute,' 'levée,' 'portage,' from the French of Louisiana or of Canada; 'adobe,' 'canyon' (cañon), 'chaparral,' 'corral,' 'hacienda,' 'lariat,' 'lasso,' 'mustang,' 'placer,' 'rancho' or 'ranche,' 'sierra,' 'tortilla,' the slang verb to 'vamosé' (the Spanish 'vamos,' let us go), from the Spaniards of Mexico and California. In like manner 'backwoodsman,' 'lumberer,' 'squatter,' 'pine-barren,' are words born of a condition of things whereof we know nothing. And this which has thus happened elsewhere, happened also here. The Britons—not to enter into the question whether they added much or little—must have added something, and in the designation of natural objects, in 'aber' and 'pen' and 'straith,' certainly added much¹ to the vocabulary of the Saxon immigrants into this island, of which those who remained in Old Saxony knew nothing.² Again, the Danish and Norwegian inroads into England were inroads not of men only but also of words. In all this an important element of dissimilation made itself felt.

Then too, where languages have diverged from one another before any definite settlement has taken place in the dictionary, out of the numerous synonyms for one and the same object which the various dialects of the common language afford, one people will perpe-

¹ Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, 2nd edit. p. 193.

² Earle, *Philology of the English Tongue*, p. 19.

tuates one, and the other another, each of them after a while losing sight altogether of that on which their choice has not fallen. That mysterious sentence of death which strikes words, we oftentimes know not why, others not better, it may be worse, taking their room—for it is not here always the survival of the fittest—will frequently cause in process of time a word to perish from one branch of what was once a common language, while it lives on, and perhaps unfolds itself into a whole family, in the other. Thus of the words which the Angles and Saxons brought with them from beyond the sea, some have lived on upon our English soil, while they have perished in that which might be called, at least by comparison, their native soil. Innumerable others, on the contrary, have here died out, which have continued to flourish there. As a specimen of those which have found English air more healthful than German we may instance ‘bairn.’ This, once common to all the Teutonic languages, is now extinct in the whole Germanic group, and has been so for centuries, ‘kind,’ having taken its place ; while it lives with us and in the languages of the Scandinavian family. Others, on the contrary, after an existence longer or shorter with us, have finally disappeared here, while they still maintain a vigorous life on the banks of the Elbe and the Eyder. A vulture is not here any more a ‘geir’ (Holland), nor a rogue a ‘skellum’ (Urquhart), nor an uncle (a *mother’s* brother) an ‘eame,’ but ‘geir’ and ‘schelm’ and ‘oheim’ still maintain a vigorous existence there. Each of these words which has perished, and they may be counted by hundreds and thousands, has been replaced by another, generally by one which is

strange to the sister language, such as either it never knew, or of which it has long since lost all recollection. 'Languages,' as Max Müller has said, 'so intimately related as Greek and Latin have fixed on different expressions for son, daughter, brother, woman, man, sky, earth, moon, hand, mouth, tree, bird, &c. It is clear that when the working of this principle of natural selection is allowed to extend more widely, languages, though proceeding from the same source, may in time acquire a totally different nomenclature for the commonest objects.'¹ There is thus at work a double element of estrangement of the one from the other. In what has gone a link between them has been broken ; in what has come in its room an element of diversity has been introduced. Sometimes, even where a word lives on in both languages, it will have become provincial in one, while it keeps a place in the classical diction of the other. Thus 'klei' is provincial in Germany,² while our 'clay' knows no such restriction of the area in which it moves.

Or where a word has not actually perished in one section of what was once a common language, it will have been thrust out of general use in one, but not in the other. Thus 'ross,' earlier 'hros,' is rare and poetical in German, very much as 'steed' with us, having in every-day use given way to 'pferd ;' while 'horse' has suffered no corresponding diminution in the commonness of its use. 'Head' in like manner

¹ *On the Science of Language*, 1st Ser. p. 271, *sqq.* See too on this 'divergence of dialects,' Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, p. 82, *sqq.*

² See Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. v.

has fully maintained its place ; but not so 'haupt,' which during the last two or three centuries has been more and more giving way to 'kopf.'

Again, words in one language and in the other will in tract of time and under the necessities of an advancing civilization appropriate to themselves a more exact domain of meaning than they had at the first, yet will not appropriate exactly the same ; or one will enlarge its meaning and the other not ; or in some other way one will drift away from moorings to which the other remains true. Our 'timber' is the same word as the German 'zimmer,' but it has not precisely the same meaning ; nor 'rider' as 'ritter,' nor 'hide' as 'haut ;' neither is 'beam' exactly the same as 'baum,' nor 'reek' as 'rauch,' nor 'shnecke' (in German a snail) as 'snake ;' nor 'dapper' as 'tapfer' nor 'deer' as 'thier,' nor 'acre' as 'acker,' nor 'whine' as 'weinen,' nor 'till' as 'ziel,' nor 'tide' and 'tidy' as 'zeit' and 'zeitig.' 'Booby' suggests an intellectual deficiency, 'bube' a moral depravity. 'Lust' in German has no subaudition of *sinful* desire ; it has within the last two hundred years acquired such in English, 'Knight' and 'knecht,' 'knave' and 'knabe' have travelled in very different directions. Much of this divergence is the work of the last two or three hundred years, so that the process of estrangement is still going forward. Thus 'elders' were parents in England not very long ago, quite as much as 'eltern' are parents to this day in Germany.¹ 'To grave' was once what 'graben' is still. 'Taufer' in German is solemn, 'dipper' in English is familiar,

¹ See my *Select Glossary*, 4th edit., s. v. Elders.

The English of England and the English of America are already revealing differences of the same kind. 'Corn' on the other side of the Atlantic means always maize, 'grain' means always wheat; while we know nothing here of these restrictions of meaning. Nay, the same differences may be traced nearer home. A 'merchant' in Scotland is not what we know by this name, but a shopkeeper;¹ while in Ireland by a 'tradesman' is meant not a grocer, butcher, or some other engaged in the distribution of commodities, but an artisan, a bricklayer, glazier, carpenter, or the like. In Northumberland wheat is *sheared*, sheep are *clipt*. Here is another element of divergence between sister languages, evermore working to make two what once had been only one.

But further, in the same way as the bulk and sinews of an arm rapidly increase, being put to vigorous use, while other limbs, whose potential energies have not been equally called forth, show no corresponding growth, even so it proves with speech. It is indeed marvellous how quickly a language will create, adapt, adopt words in any particular line of things to which those who speak that language are specially addicted; so that while it may remain absolutely poor in every other department of speech, it will prove nothing less than opulent in this.² It will follow that where races separate, and one group or

¹ Κάπηλος, not ἔμπορος.

² Pott (*Etymol. Forschung*. 2nd edit. vol. ii. p. 134) supplies some curious and instructive examples of this unfolding of a language in a particular direction. Thus in the Zulu, a Caffre dialect, where the chief or indeed entire wealth consists in cattle, there are words out of number to express cows of different

both seek new seats for themselves, the industrial tendencies of the separated groups, as influenced by the different physical aspects and capabilities of the regions which they occupy, will bring about a large development in each of words and phrases in which the other will have no share. Thus the occupants of this island became by the very conditions of their existence, and unless they were willing to be indeed, what the Latin poet called them, altogether divided from the whole world, a seafaring people. It has followed that the language has grown rich in terms having to do with the sea and with the whole life of the sea, far richer in these than are the dialects spoken by the mediterranean people of Germany. They, on the contrary, poor in this domain of words, are far better furnished than we are with terms relating to those mining operations which they pursued much earlier, on a scale more extended, and with a greater application of science and skill, than we have done.

ages, colours, qualities. Instead of helping themselves out as we do by an adjective, as a *white* cow, a *red* cow, a *barren* cow, they have a distinctive word for each of these. *We* do not think or speak much about cocoa-nuts, and only seeing them when they are full ripe, have no inducement to designate them in other stages of their growth; but in Lord North's Island, where they are the main support of the inhabitants, they have five words by which to name the fruit in its several stages from the first shoot to perfect maturity. In the Hebrew there are four different words to designate the locust in four successive stages of its development (Ewald on *Joel* i. 4). In Lithuanian there are five different names for five several kinds of stubble (Grimm, *Gesch. der Deutschen Sprache*, vol. i. p. 69). In the Dorsetshire dialect there are distinct names for the four stomachs of ruminant animals (Barnes' *Glossary*, p. 78).

There has been for centuries a vigorous activity of political life in England which has needed, and needing has fashioned for itself, a diction of its own. Germany on the contrary is so poor in corresponding terms, that when with the weak beginnings of constitutional forms in our own day some of these terms became necessary, it was obliged to borrow the word 'bill' from us. It is true that in this it was no more than reclaiming and recovering a word of its own, which had been suffered to drop through and disappear.

The same word will obtain a slightly different pronunciation, or spelling, in the one language and the other. Where there is no special philological training, a very slight variation in the former will often effectually conceal from the ear, as in the latter from the eye, an absolute identity, and for all practical purposes constitute them not one and the same, but two and different. Most of us in attempting to speak a foreign language, or to understand our own as spoken by a foreigner, have had practical experience of the obstacles to understanding or being understood, which a very slight departure from the recognized standard of pronunciation will interpose. And quite as effectual as differences of pronunciation for the ear, are differences of spelling for the eye, in the way of making recognition hard or even impossible. It would be curious to know how many Englishmen who have made fair advances in German, as commonly taught, have recognized the entire identity of 'deed' and 'that,' of 'fowl' and 'vogel,' of 'vixen' and 'füchsinn,' of 'dough' and 'teig,' of 'oath' and 'eid,' of 'durch' and 'through,' of 'dreary' and 'traurig,' of 'ivy' and 'epheu,'

of 'death' and 'tod,' of 'quick' and 'keck,' of 'deal' and 'theil,' of 'clean' and 'klein,' of 'enough' and 'genug.' It is only too easy for those who are using the very same words, to be, notwithstanding, as barbarians to one other.

Again, what was the exception at the time of separation will in one branch of the divided family have grown into the rule, while perhaps in the other branch it will have been disallowed altogether. So too idioms and other peculiar usages will have obtained allowance in one branch, which, not finding favour with the other, will in it be esteemed as violations of the law of the language, or at any rate declensions from its purity. Or again idioms, which one people have overlived, and have stored up in the unhonoured lumber-room of the past, will still be in use and honour with the other; and thus it will sometimes come to pass that what seems, and in fact is, the newer swarm, a colony which has gone forth, will have older idioms than the main body of a people which has remained behind, will retain an archaic air and old-world fashion about the words they use, their way of pronouncing, their order and manner of combining them. Thus after the Conquest our insular French gradually diverged from the French of the Continent. The Prioress in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* could speak her French 'full faire and fetishly;' but it was French, as the poet slyly adds,

'After the scole of Stratford atte bow,
For French of Paris was to hire unknowe.'¹

One of our old chroniclers, writing in the reign of

¹ For more on this subject see *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1869, p. 355.

Elizabeth, informs us that by the English colonists within the Pale in Ireland numerous words were preserved in common use,—‘the dregs of the old ancient Chaucer English,’ as he contemptuously calls them,—which were quite obsolete and forgotten in England itself. Thus they called a spider an ‘atter-cop’—a word, by the way, still in popular use in the North;—a physician a ‘leech,’ as in poetry he is still styled; a dunghill a ‘mixen,’—the word is common to this day all over England; a quadrangle or base-court a ‘bawn;’¹ they employed ‘uncouth’ in the earlier sense of ‘unknown.’ Nay more, their pronunciation and general manner of speech were so diverse from that of England, that Englishmen at their first coming over often found it hard or impossible to comprehend. Something of the same sort took place after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and the consequent formation of colonies of French Protestant refugees in various places, especially in Amsterdam and other chief cities of Holland. There gradually grew up among these what was called ‘refugee French,’² which within a generation or two diverged in several particulars from the classical language of France; the divergence being mainly occasioned by the fact that this remained stationary, while the classical language was in motion; this retained words and idioms, which the other had dismissed.³ So too, there is, as

¹ The only two writers whom Richardson quotes as using this word are Spenser and Swift, both writing in Ireland and of Irish matters.

² There is an excellent account of this ‘refugee French’ in Weiss’ *History of the Protestant Refugees of France*.

³ Lyell (*On the Antiquity of Man*, p. 466) confirms this from

I have been assured, a marked difference between the Portuguese spoken in the old country and in Brazil.

Again, the wear and tear of a language, the using up of its forms and flexions, the phonetic decay which is everywhere and in all languages incessantly going forward, will proceed at a faster rate in one branch of the language than in the other ; or, if not faster, will not light upon exactly the same forms or the same words ; or, if on the same, yet not exactly upon the same letters. Thus, to take an example of the last, the Latin 'sum' and the Greek *εἶμι*, the same word, as I need hardly tell you, are both greatly worn away,

another quarter :— ' A German colony in Pennsylvania was cut off from frequent communication with Europe, for about a quarter of a century, during the wars of the French Revolution between 1792 and 1815. So marked had been the effect even of this brief and imperfect isolation, that when Prince Bernhard of Saxe Weimar travelled among them a few years after the peace, he found the peasants speaking as they had done in Germany in the preceding century, and retaining a dialect which at home had already become obsolete (see his *Travels in North America*, p. 123). Even after the renewal of the German emigration from Europe, when I travelled in 1841 among the same people in the retired valleys of the Alleghanies. I found the newspapers full of terms half English and half German, and many an Anglo-Saxon word which had assumed a Teutonic dress, as "fencen" to fence, instead of *umzäunen*, "flauer" for flour, instead of "mehl," and so on. What with the retention of terms no longer in use in the mother country and the borrowing of new ones from neighbouring states, there might have arisen in Pennsylvania in five or six generations, but for the influx of new comers from Germany, a mongrel speech equally unintelligible to the Anglo-Saxon and to the inhabitants of the European fatherland.' Compare Sir G. C. Lewis, *On the Romance Languages*, p. 49.

—worn away in comparison with words of rarer use, as sixpences, passing oftener from hand to hand, lose their image and superscription much faster than crowns, —but they are not worn away in precisely the same letters; each has kept a letter belonging to an earlier form of the word, which the other has not kept, and lost a letter which the other has not lost.¹ This too, the unequal incidence of phonetic decay, will account for much.

Nor may we leave out of sight that which Jacob Grimm has dwelt on so strongly, and brought into so clear a light—namely, the modifying influence on the throat and other organs of speech, and thus on human speech itself, which soil and climate exercise—an influence which, however slight at any one moment, yet being evermore in operation, produces effects very far from slight in the end. We have here in great part an explanation of the harsh and guttural sounds which those dwelling in cold mountainous districts make their own, of the softer and more liquid tones of those who dwell in the plains and under a more genial sky. These climatic influences indeed reach very far, not merely as they affect the organs of speech, but also the characters of those who speak; which characters will not fail in their turn to utter themselves in the language. Where there is a general lack of energy and consequent shrinking from effort, this will very soon manifest itself in a corresponding feebleness in the pronunciation of words, while, on the other hand, a Dorian strength will show itself in a corresponding breadth of utterance.

¹ Pott, *Wurzel-Wörterbuch*, vol. ii. p. 258.

But it would lead me too far, were I to attempt to make an exhaustive enumeration of all the forces which are constantly at work, to set ever farther from one another in this matter of language those who once were entirely at one. These causes which I have instanced must suffice. The contemplation of these is enough to make evident that, even could we abstract all the influences upon English which the Norman Conquest has exercised, it would still remain a very different language at this day from any now spoken by Old-Saxon or Frisian,¹ that it would

¹ In the contemplation of facts like these it has been sometimes anxiously asked, whether a day will not arrive when the language now spoken alike on this side of the Atlantic and on the other, will divide into two languages, an Old English and a New. It is not impossible, and yet we can confidently hope that such a day is far distant. For the present at least, there are mightier forces tending to keep us together than those which are tending to divide. Doubtless, if they who went out from among us to people and subdue a new continent, had left our shores two or three centuries earlier than they did, when the language was much farther removed from that ideal after which it was unconsciously striving, and in which, once reached, it has in great measure acquiesced ; if they had not carried with them to their new homes their English Bible, their English Shakespeare, and what else of worth had already uttered itself in the English tongue ; if, having once swarmed, the intercourse between Old and New England had been entirely broken off, or only rare and partial ; there would then have unfolded themselves differences between the language spoken here and there, which, in tract of time accumulating and multiplying, might already have gone far to constitute the languages no longer one, but two. As it is, however, the joint operation of those three causes, namely, that the separation did not take place in the infancy or early youth of the language, but only in its ripe manhood, that England and America own a body of literature, to which they alike look up

be easy to set far too high the resemblance which under other circumstances might have existed between English and the other dialects of the Teutonic stock. Still they would have resembled one another far more nearly than now they do. Let us endeavour a little to realize to ourselves English as it might then have been ; and in view of this consider the disturbing forces which the Norman occupation of England brought with it, and what their action upon the language

and appeal as containing the authoritative standards of the language, that the intercourse between the two peoples has been large and frequent, hereafter probably to be larger and more frequent still, has up to this present time been strong enough effectually to traverse, repress, and check all those forces which tend to divergence. At the same time one must own that there are not wanting some ominous signs. Of late, above all since the conclusion of their great Civil War, some writers on the other side of the Atlantic have announced that henceforth America will, so to speak, set up for herself, will not accept any longer the laws and canons of speech which may here be laid down as of final authority for all members of the English-speaking race, but travel in her own paths, add words to her own vocabulary, adopt idioms of her own, as may seem the best to her. She has a perfect right to do so. The language is as much hers as ours. There are on this matter some excellent remarks in Dwight's *Modern Philology*, 1st Ser. p. 141, with which compare Whitney, *Language and the Study of Language*, p. 173. Still, for our own sake, who now read so many American books with profit and delight, and look forward to a literature grander and more original still unfolding itself there, for our own sake, that we do not speak of hers, we must hope that 'to donate,' 'to placate,' 'to berate,' 'to belittle,' 'to happify,' 'shortage,' 'expressage,' 'declinature,' 'resurrected,' 'factatively,' 'displurgingly,' and the like, are not fair specimens of the words which will constitute the future *differentia* between the vocabularies of America and of England.

was; so we shall be better able to measure what the language in the absence of these influences would have been.

The Battle of Hastings had been lost and won. Whether, except for the strange and terrible coincidence of the two invasions of England almost at the same instant, the English battle-axes might not have proved a match for the Norman spears we cannot now determine. But the die was cast. The invader on that day of St. Calixtus had so planted his foot on English soil, that all after efforts were utterly impotent to dislodge him. But it took nearly three centuries before the two races, the victors and the vanquished, who now dwelt side by side in the same land, were thoroughly reconciled and blended into one people. During the first century which followed the Conquest, the language of the native population was, as they were themselves, utterly crushed and trodden under foot. A foreign dynasty, speaking a foreign tongue, and supported by an army of foreigners, was on the throne of England; Norman ecclesiastics filled all the high places of the Church, filled probably every place of honour and emolument; Norman castles studded the land. During the second century, a reaction may very distinctly be traced, at first most feeble, but little by little gathering strength, on the part of the conquered race to reassert themselves, and as a part of their reassertion to reassert the right of English to be the national language of England. In the third century after the Conquest it was at length happily evident that Normandy was for ever lost (1206), that for Norman and Englishman alike there was no other sphere but England; this reassertion of the

old Saxondom of the land gaining strength every day; till, as a visible token that the vanquished were again the victors, in the year 1349 English and not French was the language taught in the schools of this land.¹

But the English, which thus emerged from this struggle of centuries in which it had refused to die, was very different from that which had entered into it. The whole of its elaborate inflections, its artificial grammar, showed tokens of thorough disorganization and decay; indeed most of it had already disappeared. How this came to pass I will explain to you in the excellent words of the late Professor of Anglo-Saxon at Oxford. 'Great and speedy,' he observes, 'must have been the effect of the Norman Conquest in ruining the ancient grammar. The leading men in the state having no interest in the vernacular, its cultivation fell immediately into neglect. The chief of the Saxon clergy deposed or removed, who should now keep up that supply of religious Saxon literature, of the copiousness of which we may judge even in our day by the considerable remains that have outlived hostility and neglect? Now that the Saxon landowners were dispossessed, who should patronize the Saxon bard, and welcome the man of song in the halls of mirth? The shock of the Conquest gave a deathblow to Saxon literature. The English language continued to be spoken by the masses who

¹ On the whole subject of the relations in which the language of a conquering people will stand to the language of the conquered, and on the causes which will determine the final triumph of the one or the other, the reader is referred to Freeman's *Origin of the English Nation*, Lecture III., in *Macmillan's Magazine*, May, 1870, pp. 31-46.

could speak no other ; and here and there a secluded student continued to write in it. But its honours and emoluments were gone, and a gloomy period of depression lay before the Saxon language as before the Saxon people. The inflection system could not live through this trying period. Just as we accumulate superfluities about us in prosperity, but in adversity we get rid of them as encumbrances, and we like to travel light when we have only our own legs to carry us—just so it happened to the English language. For now all these sounding terminations that made so handsome a figure in Saxon courts ; the -AN, the -UM ; the -ERA, the -ANA ; the -IGENNE and -IGENOUN ; all these, superfluous as bells on idle horses, were laid aside when the nation had lost its own political life, and its pride of nationality, and had received leaders and teachers who spoke a strange tongue.’¹

But another force, not from within but from without, had been at work also for the disorganization of the language and the effectual breaking up of its grammar. A conquering race under the necessity of communicating with a conquered in their own tongue is apt to make very short work of the niceties of grammar in that tongue, to brush all these away, as so much trumpery, which they will not be at the pains to master. If they can make their commands intelligible, this is about all with which they are concerned. They go straight to this mark ; but whether, in so doing, adjective agree with substantive, or verb with noun, or the proper case be employed, for this they care nothing,

¹ Earle, *The Philology of the English Tongue*, p. 41.

if only they are understood. And this is not all ; there is a certain satisfaction, a secret sense of superiority, in thus stripping the language of its grace and ornament, outraging its laws, compelling it to novel forms, showing, even while it is used, how little it is regarded, and making thus not merely the wills, but the very speech of the conquered, to confess its subjection.¹

Nor was it the grammar only which had thus become a ruin. Those three centuries had made enormous havoc in the vocabulary as well. Rich and expressive as this had been in the palmy days of Anglo-Saxon literature, abundantly furnished as undoubtedly then it was with words having to do with matters of moral and intellectual concern, and in the nomenclature of the passions and affections, it was very far from being richly supplied with them now. Words which dealt with the material interests of everyday life could scarcely help remaining familiar and vernacular ; but those pertaining to higher domains of thought, feeling, and passion and to all loftier culture either moral or material, had in vast multitudes dropt out of use and been forgotten. Curious illustrations have been given of the destruction which had been wrought in some of the most illustrious and far-branching families of words, so that of some of these there did not half a dozen, of others there did not one representative, survive.²

The destruction of grammatical forms was, it is true, only the acceleration and the more complete carrying

¹ Compare Sir G. C. Lewis, *On the Romance Languages*, pp. 21-23.

² Thus see Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, pp. 113, 443.

out of what would anyhow have come to pass, although perhaps not so thoroughly, as certainly not at so early a date. For indeed there is nothing more certain than that all languages in their historical period are in a continual process of simplifying themselves, dropping their subtler distinctions, allowing the mere collocation of words in their crude state or other devices of the same kind to do that which once was done by inflection. To this subject, however, I shall have occasion by and by to recur; I will not therefore dwell upon it here. But the insufficiency of the vocabulary, consequent in part on this impoverishment of it, in part on the novel thoughts and things claiming to find utterance through it, was a less tolerable result of those centuries of depression; happily too was capable of remedy; which the perishing of grammatical forms, even if remedy had been looked for, was not.

Two ways were open here. An attempt might have been made to revive and recover the earlier words which had been lost and let go; and where new needs demanded expression, to fabricate from the vernacular words which should correspond to these new needs. Now, if the revival of the English nationality had meant the expulsion or destruction of the dominant Norman race, this would very probably have been the course taken; and the reaction would have put under a common ban language and institutions alike. But happily it meant no such thing. It meant the blending of the two races into one, the forming of a new English nation by the gradual coalition or rather fusion of the two, by the growing consciousness that this England was the equal heritage of both, its welfare the common interest of both. It was

on neither side a triumph, or rather, as are all reconciliations, it was on both sides a triumph. But where under these circumstances should a supply of the new necessities be so naturally looked for as from the French? That was the language of one of the parties in this happy transaction; of the one which, in respect of language, was giving up far the most, and which therefore might fairly look for this partial compensation. Words of theirs, few as compared with those which afterwards found an entrance into the English tongue, but not few in themselves, had already effected a lodgement there; others, if not adopted, had become more or less familiar to English ears; not to say that the language which they spoke was in possession of a literature far in advance at that time of any other in modern Europe, a literature eagerly read here as elsewhere in originals or translations more or less free, representing, as it did, that new world which was springing up, and not, as the Anglo-Saxon did, an old world which was passing or had passed away.

Now it is a very interesting question, and one which often has been discussed, What proportion do the French words which then found their way into the language, or which have subsequently entered by the door which was thus opened to them, by the declaration then virtually made that their admission was *not* contrary to the genius of the language, bear to the original stock of the language on which they were engrafted? A recent enquirer, who professes to have made an inventory of the whole language, has arrived at this result, namely, that considerably more than one half of our words, not indeed of those which we use in writing, still less in speaking, but more than one

half of those registered in our dictionaries, are Romanic,¹ are therefore the result of the Norman Conquest, and but for it with very few exceptions would not have found their way to us at all.

I believe the proportion which he indicates to be quite too high, and the data on which his calculation proceeds to be altogether misleading. But without entering upon this question, and assuming proportions which I am persuaded are more accurate, let us suppose that there are in round numbers one hundred thousand words in the English language,—it is easy to make them any number we please, according to the scheme of enumeration upon which we start, to bring them up to half as many again, or to reduce them, as some have done, to less than one half,²—and let us further suppose that some thirty thousand of these have come to us through that contact with France into which the Battle of Hastings and its consequences brought us, and but for these would never have reached us at all. Let us, I say, assume this; and a problem the most interesting presents itself to us—namely, how should we, or whoever else might in that event have been at this moment living in England, have supplied the absence of these words? What would Englishmen have done, if the language had never received these additions? It would be a slight and insufficient answer, in fact no answer at all, to reply, They would have done without them. They

¹ Thommerel, *Recherches sur la Fusion du Franco-Normand et de l'Anglo-Saxon*. Paris, 1841.

² Thus in Richardson's *Dictionary* the words beginning with Z are 30 in number; in Todd they are 47; in Webster, 89.

could not have done without them. The words which we thus possess, and which it is suggested we might have done without, express a multitude of facts, thoughts, feelings, conceptions, which, rising up before a people growing in civilization, in knowledge, in learning, in intercourse with other lands, in consciousness of its own vocation in this world, *must* find their utterance by one means or another, could not have gone without some words or other to declare them. The problem before us is, *what* these means would have been ; by what methods the language would have helped itself, if it had been obliged, like so many sister-dialects, to draw solely on its own resources, to rely on home manufactures, instead of importing, as it was able to do, so many serviceable articles ready made from abroad.

To this question I answer first and generally, and shall afterwards enter into particulars, that necessity is the mother of invention, and that many powers of the language, which are now in a great measure dormant, which have been only partially evoked, would have been called into far more frequent and far more vigorous exercise, under the stress of those necessities which would then have made themselves felt. Take, for example, the power of composition, that is, of forming new words by the combination of old—a power which the language possesses, though it is one which has grown somewhat weak and stiff through disuse. This would doubtless have been appealed to far more frequently than actually it has been. Thrown back on itself, the language would have evolved out of its own bosom, to supply its various wants, a far larger number of compound words

than it has now produced. This is no mere guess of mine. You have only to look at the sister German language—*half*-sister it is now, it would have been *whole* sister but for that famous field of Hastings—and observe what it has effected in this line, how it has stopped the gaps of which it has gradually become aware by aid of these compound words, and you may so learn what *we*, under similar conditions, would have done. Thus, if we had not found it more convenient to adopt the French ‘desert,’ if English had been obliged, like the spider, to spin a word out of its own bowels, it might have put ‘sand-waste’ together, as the German actually has done. This and other words I shall suggest may sound strange to you at first hearing, but would have long left off their strangeness, had they been current for some hundreds of years. If we had not the Low-Latin ‘massacre,’ we might have had ‘blood-bath,’ which would not be a worse word in English than in German. So too, if we had not had ‘deluge,’ the Latin ‘diluvium,’ we too might have lighted on ‘sin-flood,’ as others have done. A duel might have been a ‘two-fight’ or ‘twifight,’ following the analogy of ‘twilight’ and ‘twibill.’ Instead of ‘pirate’ we might have had ‘sea-robber ;’ indeed, if I do not mistake, we have the word. We should have needed a word for ‘hypocrisy ;’ but the German ‘scheinheiligkeit’ at any rate suggests that ‘shewholiness’ might have effectually served our turn. This last example is from the Greek, but the Greek in our tongue entered in the rear of the Latin, and would not have entered except by the door which that had opened.

Let me at the same time observe, that the fact of the Germans having fallen on these combinations

does not make it in the least certain that we should have fallen upon the same. There is a law of necessity in the evolution of languages ; they pursue certain courses on which we may confidently count. But there is a law of liberty no less, and this liberty, making itself felt in this region, together with a thousand other causes, leaves it quite certain that in some, and possibly in all these instances, we should have supplied our wants in some other way, not travelled in exactly the same paths as they have struck out for themselves. Thus, nearly allied as the Dutch is to the German, and greatly under German influence as it has been, it has a number of compound words of which the German knows nothing.¹ Still the examples which I have given sufficiently indicate to us the *direction* which the language would have taken.

But we are not here driven to a region of conjectures, or to the suggesting what *might* have been done. We can actually appeal to a very numerous company of these compound words, which have been in the language ; but which have been suffered to drop, the Latin competitors for some reason or other having, in that struggle for existence to which words are as much exposed as animals, carried the day against it. Now we may confidently affirm that all, or very nearly all, of these would have survived to the present hour, would constitute a part of our present vocabulary, if they had actually been wanted ; and they would have been wanted, if competing French words, following in the train of the conquering race, had not first made them not indispensable, and then

¹ See Jean Paul, *Aesthetik*, § 84.

wholly pushed them from their places. When I say this I do not mean to imply that these words were all actually born before the Norman Conquest, but only that the Conquest brought influences to bear, which were too strong for them, and in the end cut short their existence.

Thus, if we had not proverb, 'soothsaw' or 'by-word' would have served our turn; 'sourdough' would have supplied the place of leaven; 'wellwill-
ingness' of benevolence; 'againbuying' of redemption; 'againrising' of resurrection; 'undeadliness' of immortality; 'uncunningness' of ignorance; 'unmildness' of asperity; 'forefighter' of champion; 'earthtilth' of agriculture; 'earthtiller' of agriculturist; 'comeling' of stranger; 'greatdoingly' of magnificently; 'to afterthink' (still in use in Lancashire), might have stood for to repent; 'medeful' for meritorious; 'untellable' for ineffable; 'dearworth' for precious; 'turngidy' for vertigo—all which are in Wiclif. Chaucer has 'foreword' for promise; 'bode-word' for prohibition; and *Piers Ploughman* 'goldhoard' for treasure. 'Tongful' (see Bosworth), or 'tungy' (Wiclif), would have stood for loquacious; 'truelessness' for perfidy; 'footfast' for captive; 'allwitty' (*Pricke of Conscience*) for omniscient; 'witword' for testimony; 'godspeller' (Hampole) for evangelist. Jewel has 'foretalk' for preface; Coverdale 'childship' for adoption, 'showtoken' for sign, 'to unhallow' for to profane; Holland 'sunstead' for solstice; Rogers 'turnagains' for reverses. As little should we have let go 'bookcraft' for literature, 'shipcraft' for navigation, 'leechcraft' for medicine, or 'wordcraft' for logic. 'Starconner' (Gascoigne) did service once

side by side with astrologer; 'redesman' with counsellor; 'halfgod' (Golding) has the advantage over demigod, that it is all of one piece; 'to eyebite' (Holland) tells its story at least as well as to fascinate; 'weaponsheue' (the word still lives in Scotland) as review; 'yearday' (*Promptorium*) as anniversary; 'shriftfather' as confessor; 'unrestfulness' (Spenser) as disquietude, 'evenhood' (Levins) as equality, 'betterment' (Jackson) as superiority. 'Earshrift' (Tyn-dale) is only two syllables, while auricular confession is eight; 'waterfright' is preferable to our awkward hydrophobia; and 'watersick' is as good as dropsical. The lamprey (lambens petram) would have been, as in country parts it now is, the 'suckstone' or the 'lickstone;' and the anemone the 'windflower.' For remorse of conscience we might have had, and it exactly corresponds, 'ayenbite of inwyte,' being, as this is, the title of a remarkable religious treatise of the middle of the fourteenth century;¹ in which I observe among other noticeable substitutes for our Latin words, 'unlusthead' for disinclination. Emigrants would everywhere have been called what they are now called in districts of the North, 'outwanderers' or 'outgangers;' natives would have been 'homelings.' A preacher who bade us to sacrifice some of our 'need-nots' (the word is in Fuller) instead of some of our superfluities, to the distresses of others, would not deliver his message less intelligibly than now; and as

¹ The *Ayenbite of Inwyte* is, in a philological point of view, one of the most valuable of the many valuable books which the *Early English Text Society* has rendered accessible at an extraordinarily low price to all who wish to study the origins of the English language.

little would he who should enumerate the many 'pull-backs' (it is a Puritan word), instead of the many difficulties, which we find in the way of attaining to eternal life.

Then too with the absence from the language of the Latin prefixes, the Saxon would have come far more into play. The Latin which we employ the most frequently, or rather which are oftenest found in words which we have adopted, are 'sub' as in 'subdue,' 'subtract;' 'de' as in 'descendant,' 'deprive;' 'circum' as in 'circumference,' 'circumvent;' and 'præ' or 'pro' as in 'predecessor,' 'progenitor.' Had these been wanting, the Latin words to which they are prefixed would have been wanting too. How would the language have fared without them? Not so ill. They would have left no chasm which it would not have been comparatively easy to fill up. Thus if the speakers of English had not possessed 'subjugate' they would have had 'underyoke,' if not 'subvert,' yet still 'underturn,' and so on with many more now to be found in Wiclif's Bible and elsewhere. There is not at the present moment a single word in the English language—one or two may perhaps survive in the dialects—beginning with the prefix 'um,' the Anglo-Saxon 'ymb.' There were once a great many. An embrace was an 'umgripe' or a gripe round (um= $\alpha\mu\phi\acute{\iota}$), a circuit an 'umgang;' the circumference or periphery of a circle was the 'umstroke;' to surround was to 'umlapp' (*Pricke of Conscience*); to besiege on every side 'to umbesiege' (Sibbald, *Glossary*). The last appearance of 'umstroke' is in Fuller, while it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to find so late an example of any of the others.

We might have had, and probably should have had in the case which I am imagining, a large group of such words, instead of those now beginning with 'circum.' In the absence of 'præ' or 'pro,' 'fore,' which even now enters into so many of our words, as 'foretell,' 'forewarn,' would have entered into more. As we have just seen, for preface we should have had 'fore-talk,' or 'forespeech' (*Ayenbite*); for predecessor 'foreganger,' for progenitor 'fore-elder;'—in all this I am not guessing, but am everywhere bringing forward words which existed once in the language.

The prefix 'for,' adding an intensitive meaning, one, that is, of thoroughness, and corresponding to the German 'ver,' the Latin 'per,'—not therefore to be confounded with 'fore,'—to which we already owe several excellent words, 'forlorn,' 'forbid,' 'forgo,' would have yielded us many more, each one of which would have rendered some Latin word superfluous. We can adduce the participles, 'forwandered' (*Piers Ploughman*), 'forwearied,' 'forwasted,' 'forpined' (all in Spenser), 'forwept,' 'forwelked,' and the verbs 'for-faren,' to go to ruin (exactly the Latin 'per-ire'), 'for-shapen'=to deform (*Piers Ploughman*), with other words not a few, as samples of much more in this direction which, if need had been, the language could have effected. 'Mis' too, which already does much work, as in 'misplace,' 'mislead,' would have been called to do more; instead of to abuse we should have had 'to miscall' (the word is even now in popular use); and the like. 'Out' would have been put to more duty than now it is; thus 'outtake' would have kept the place from which now it has been thrust by 'except,' as 'outdrive' has been by 'expel.' It would

have fared the same with 'after.' Instead of our successors we should speak of our 'aftercomers;' consequences would have been 'aftercomings;' posthumous would have been 'afterborn;' and a postscript an 'after-tale.' All these too existed once. 'To backjaw' is current in some of our dialects still, and would have been a vigorous substitute for 'to retort.'

Something, again, may be concluded of what the English-speaking race would have been able to effect, if thrown exclusively upon such wealth as it possessed at home, by considering the more or less successful attempts of some who have chosen, without any such absolute necessity, to travel the paths, which in that case there would have been no choice but to tread. Thus Sir John Cheke, in his version of St. Matthew, has evidently substituted, as often as he could, Saxon words for Greek and Latin; thus for proselyte he has substituted 'freshman,' for prophet 'foreshewer,' for lunatic 'moonied.' Puttenham in the terms of art which he employs in his *Art of English Poesy* has made a similar attempt, though with no remarkable success. Fairfax, author of a curious and in some aspects an interesting book, *The Bulk and Selvedge of the World*, has done better. He too would fain by his own example show how very rarely even in a subject of large range it is necessary to employ any other words than such as are homegrowths; that 'moreness,' for example, does its work as well as plurality, 'findings' as inventions. I extract a brief passage from the Introduction, at once for its bearing on the subject which we now have in hand, and also as itself a testimony of the vigorous English which it is possible under such self-imposed limitations to write :

‘I think it will become those of us, who have a more hearty love for what is our own, than wanton longings after what is others’, to fetch back some of our own words that have been jostled out in wrong, that worse from elsewhere might be hoisted in ; or else to call in from the fields and waters, shops and workhousen, that well fraught world of words that answers works, by which all learners are taught to do, and not to make a clatter.’

I remember once, this subject being under familiar discussion, and one present vaunting the powers of our Anglo-Saxon tongue to produce words of its own which should thus answer any and every need, and this without being beholden to any foreign tongue, another present put him to the proof, demanding a sufficient native equivalent for ‘impenetrability.’ The challenge was accepted, and without a moment’s delay ‘unthoroughfaresomeness’ was produced. The word may not be a graceful one, but take it to pieces, and you will find that there is nothing wanting to it. For what is impenetrability ? It is the quality in one thing which does not allow it to be pierced or passed through by another. And now dissect its proposed equivalent ; and first, detaching from it its two prefixes, and affixes as many, you have ‘fare’ or passage for the body of the word ; you have next ‘thoroughfare’ or place through which there is a passage ; by aid of the suffix ‘some’ you obtain the adjective ‘thoroughfaresome,’ or affording a passage through ; the negative prefix ‘un’ gives you ‘unthoroughfaresome,’ the negation of this ; and the second suffix ‘ness,’ ‘unthoroughfaresomeness,’ or the state which refuses to afford a passage through,—in other words, impenetrability.

We can thus, I think, trace, and not altogether by mere guesswork or at random, some of the paths along which English would have travelled, had it been left to itself, and to its own natural and orderly development, instead of being forced, by the stress of external circumstances, into paths in part at least altogether new. We can assert with confidence that it would have been no unserviceable, shiftless, nor ignoble tongue ; and this, while we gladly and thankfully acknowledge that it has done better, being what it is, that language in which our English Bible is written, in which Shakespeare and Milton have garnered for the after world the rich treasure of their minds.

Let us, before quite dismissing this subject, contemplate two or three points which broadly distinguish English as it is from English as it would then have been. The language, we may be quite sure, would in that case have been more abundantly supplied with inflections than at present it is. It was, as we saw just now, during the period of extreme depression which followed on the Conquest that it stripped itself so bare of these. I do not of course mean to imply that a vast number of inflections would not, according to the universal law of all languages, have anyhow fallen away. But continuing, as it would have done, the language of the Church, the Court, and of literature, it would never have become that mere *torso* which it was, when at length it emerged victorious from its three hundred years of conflict for supremacy on this English soil. We should assuredly have possessed a much more complex grammatical system, probably as complex or nearly as complex as the German possesses at the present day. Foreigners

complain that even now English is hard enough to master ; it would assuredly have been much harder then. There would have been many more distinctions to remember. Our nouns substantive, instead of being all declined in one uniform manner, would have been declined some in one way, some in another ; they would probably have had their three genders,—masculine, feminine, and neuter ; and have modified according to these the terminations of the adjectives in regimen with them ; and very much more of this kind, now dismissed, and on the whole happily dismissed, would have been retained.

The language is infinitely richer now in synonyms than but for this settlement of French and Latin in its midst it would have been—in words covering the same, or very nearly the same, spaces of meaning. In cases almost innumerable it has what we may call *duplicate* words ; there can be very few languages in the world so amply furnished with these. The way it has obtained them is this. It has kept the Saxon word, and superadded to this the Latin, or the French derived from the Latin. Thus we have kept ‘heavenly,’ but we have added ‘celestial ;’ we have not dismissed ‘earthly,’ though we have acquired ‘terrestrial ;’ nor ‘fiery,’ though we have adopted ‘igneous ;’ ‘providence’ has not put ‘foresight’ out of use, nor ‘flower’ ‘bloom,’ nor ‘benediction’ ‘blessing,’ nor ‘reign’ ‘kingdom,’ nor ‘omnipotent’ ‘almighty,’ nor ‘cordial’ ‘hearty,’ nor ‘exonerate’ ‘unburden.’ I might go on instancing these almost without end, but I have dwelt more fully on this matter elsewhere,¹ and here therefore will not urge it more.

¹ *Study of Words*, 14th edit. p. 236.

Nor can it be said that this abundance is a mere piece of luxury, still less that it is an embarrassment. It gives the opportunity of weaving now a homelier, now a more scholarly garment of speech, as may seem most advisable for the immediate need. Poetry is evidently a gainer by it, in the wider choice of expressions which it has thus at command, to meet its manifold exigencies, now of rhyme, now of melody, and now of sentiment. And prose is not less a gainer, demanding as it does rhythm and modulation, though of another kind, quite as urgently as poetry does, and having these much more within its reach through this ampler choice of words than otherwise it would have had. Thus most of us have admired in Handel's greatest composition the magnificent effect of those words from the Apocalypse, 'For the Lord God *omnipotent* reigneth.' Now the word which our Translators have here rendered 'omnipotent,' they have everywhere else rendered 'almighty ;' but substitute 'almighty' here, and how manifest the loss. What a sublime variation have they thus found within their reach.¹

¹ I only know one in modern times, but he is one whose judgments must always carry great weight, Dr. Guest, who in his *History of English Rhythms* takes a less favourable view of the results of the large importation of French and Latin words into the language :—'The evils resulting from these importations have, I think, been generally underrated in this country. When a language must draw upon its own wealth for a new term, its forms and analogies are kept fresh in the minds of those who so often use them. But with the introduction of foreign terms, not only is the symmetry—the *science*—of the language injured, but its laws are brought less frequently under notice, and are the less used, as their application becomes more difficult. If a new

These are manifest gains ; but for all this I would not affirm that everything is gain. Thus if our Saxon had never been disturbed, there would certainly have been in the language a far smaller number of what our ancestors called ‘inkhorn terms,’ the peculiar property of the scholar, not used and not understood by the poor and the illiterate. More words would be what all words ought to be, and once were, ‘thought-pictures,’ transparent with their own meaning, telling their own story to everybody. Thus if I say that Christ ‘sympathizes’ with his people, or even if I say, ‘has compassion,’ I am not sure that every one follows me ; but if I were to say, He ‘fellow-feels,’ and the word existed not long ago, as ‘fellow-feeling’ does still, all would understand. ‘Redemption’ conveys to our poor the vague impression of some great benefit ; but ‘againbuying’ would have conveyed a far more distinct one. ‘Middler’—this word also is to be found in Wiclif—would have the same advantage over ‘mediator.’ Even our Authorized Version, comparatively little as we have to complain of there, would itself not have lost, but gained, if its authors had been absolutely compelled to use the store of English vocables at their

word were added to any of the purer languages, such as the Sanscrit, the Greek, or the Welsh, it would soon be the root of numerous offshoots, substantives, adjectives, verbs, &c., all formed according to rule, and modifying the meaning of their root according to well-known analogies. But in a mixed and broken language few or no such consequences follow. The word remains barren and the language is “enriched” like a tree covered over with wreaths taken from the boughs of its neighbour ; which carries a goodly show of foliage and withers beneath the shade.’

command, if sometimes they had been shut in, so to speak, to these; for instance, if instead of 'celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial,' they had had no choice but to write 'heavenly bodies and bodies earthly' (1 Cor. xv. 40). All would have understood them then; I very much doubt whether all understand them now.

Other advantages too might have followed, if the language had continued all of one piece. Thus in the matter of style, it would not have been so fatally easy writing bad English to fancy this bad to be good, as now it is. That worst and most offensive kind of bad English, which disguises poverty of thought, and lack of any real command over the language, by the use of big, hollow lumbering Latin words, would not have been possible. It is true that on the other hand the opportunities of writing a grand, sustained, stately English would not have been nearly so great, except for the incoming of that multitude of noble words which Latin, the stateliest of all languages, has lent us. Something not very different indeed, not immeasurably remote from Swift's or Dryden's prose might have existed; but nothing in the least resembling the stately march of Hooker's, of Milton's, or Jeremy Taylor's. A good style would have been a much simpler, less complex matter than now it is; the language would have been an instrument with not so many strings, an organ with fewer pipes and stops, of less compass, with a more limited diapason, wanting many of the grander resonances which it now possesses; but an instrument easier to play on, requiring infinitely less skill; not so likely to betray into gross absurdities, nor to make an open show of the incapacity of such as handled it badly.

On the whole, then, while that Norman Conquest, in the disturbing forces which it has exerted on the English language, has no doubt brought with it losses no less than gains, we may boldly affirm that the gains very far transcend the losses. As so many things have wrought together to make England what she is, as we may trace in our 'rough island-story' so many wonderful ways in which good has been educed from evil, and events the most unpromising have left their blessing behind them, not otherwise has it been here. That which brought down our English tongue from its pride of place, stript it of so much in which it gloried, condemned it, as might have seemed, if not to absolute extinction, yet to serve henceforward as the mere patois of an illiterate race of subject bondsmen and hinds, it was even that very event which in its ultimate consequences wrought out for it a completeness and a perfection which it would never else have obtained. So strange in their ultimate issues are the ways of Providence with men.

LECTURE III.

GAINS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

IT is with good right that we speak of some languages as *living*, of others as *dead*. All spoken languages may be ranged in the first class ; for as men will never consent to use a language without more or less modifying it in their use, will never so far forgo their own activity as to leave it exactly where they found it, there follows from this that so long as it is thus the utterance of men thinking and acting, it will inevitably show itself alive, and that by many unmistakeable proofs, by growth and misgrowth, by acquisition and loss, by progress and decay. This title therefore of living, a spoken language abundantly deserves ; for it is one in which, spoken as it is by living men, *vital* energies are still in operation. It is one which is in course of actual evolution ; which, if the life that animates it be a healthy one, is appropriating and assimilating to itself what it anywhere finds congenial to its own life, multiplying its resources, increasing its wealth ; while at the same time it is casting off useless and cumbersome forms, dismissing from its vocabulary words of which it finds no use, rejecting by a reactive energy the foreign and heterogeneous, which may for a while have forced themselves upon it. In the process of all this it may

easily make mistakes ; in the desire to simplify, it may let go distinctions which were not useless, and which it would have been better to retain ; the acquisitions which it makes are very far from being all gains ; it sometimes rejects as worthless, and suffers to die out, what served for many and most necessary uses, was most worthy to have lived. So far as it commits any of these faults its life is not healthy ; it is not growing richer but poorer ; there are here tokens, however remote and slight as yet, of disorganization, decay, and ultimate death. But still it lives, and even these misgrowths and malformations, the rejection of this good, the taking up into itself of that bad, even these errors are themselves the utterances and evidences of life. A dead language knows nothing of all this. It is dead, because books, and not now any generation of living men, are the guardians of it, and what they guard, they guard without change. Its course has been completely run, and it is now equally incapable of gaining and of losing. We may come to know it better ; but in itself it is not, and never can be, other than it was before it ceased from the lips of men. In one sense it is dead, though in another, if the life which it once lived was a glorious one, it may be more true to say of it that it has put on immortality.

Our own is, of course, a living language still. It is therefore gaining and losing. It is a tree in which the vital sap is circulating yet ; and as this works, new leaves are continually being put forth by it, old are dying and dropping away. I propose to consider some of the evidences of this life at work in it still. In my present lecture and in that which follows I

shall take for my subject, the *sources* from which the English language has enriched its vocabulary, the *periods* at which it has made the chief additions to this, the *character* of the additions which at different periods it has made, and the *motives* which induced it to seek them.

In my first lecture I dwelt with some emphasis on the fact, that the core, the radical constitution of our language, is Anglo-Saxon ; so that, composite or mingled as it is, it is such only in its vocabulary, not in its construction, inflections, or generally its grammatical forms. These are all of one piece ; there is indeed no amalgamation possible in these ; and whatever of new has come in has been compelled to conform itself to the old. The framework is native ; only a part of the filling in is exotic ; and of this filling in, of these comparatively more recent accessions, I now propose to speak.

The first great augmentation by foreign words of our Anglo-Saxon vocabulary, and that which in importance has very far exceeded all the others put together, was a consequence, although not an immediate one, of the Battle of Hastings. You will have gathered from what I have said already that I am unable to share in the sentimental regrets over the results of that battle in which Thierry has led the way. With the freest acknowledgment of the miseries entailed for a while on the Saxon race by the Norman Conquest, I can regard that Conquest in no other light than as the making of England ; a judgment, it is true, but a judgment and a mercy in one. It was a rough and rude, and yet most necessary discipline, to which the race which for so many

hundred years had occupied the English soil was thereby submitted ; a great tribulation, yet one not undeserved, and which could not have been spared ; so grievously relaxed were all the moral energies of Saxon England at the time of the Conquest, so far had the vigour of those institutions by which alone a nation lives, decayed and departed. God never showed more plainly that He had a great part for England to play in the world's story than when He brought hither that aspiring Norman race. Heavily as for a while they laid their hand on the subject people, they did at the same time contribute elements absolutely essential to the future greatness and glory of the land which they made their own. But it is only of their contributions in one particular direction that we have here to speak.

Neither can it be said of these that they followed at once. The actual interpenetration of our earlier English with any large amount of French words did not find place till a very much later day. Some French words we find very soon after ; but in the main the two streams of language continued for a long while separate and apart, even as the two nations remained aloof from one another, a conquering and a conquered, and neither forgetting the fact. It was not till the middle of the fourteenth century that French words began to find their way in any very large number into English. Then within a period of some fifty years very many more effected a permanent settlement among us than had so done during the three hundred preceding. In the bringing in of these too much has been ascribed to the influence and authority of a single man. Some have praised, others

have blamed,¹ Chaucer overmuch for his share in this work. Standing in the forefront of his time, he no doubt fell in with and set forward tendencies in the language, yet these such, it is plain, as were in active operation already. To assume that the greater number of French vocables which he employed had never been employed before, were strange to English ears, is to assume, as Tyrwhitt urges well, that his poetry presented to his contemporaries a motley patchwork of language, and is quite irreconcilable with the fact that he took his place at once as the popular poet of the nation.²

It would be hardly too much to affirm that there is quite as large a proportion of Latin words in *Piers Ploughman* as in Chaucer,—certainly a very remarkable fact, when we call to mind that *Piers Ploughman* dates some twenty or thirty years earlier than Chaucer's more important poems, that in form it cleaves to the old alliterative scheme of versification, and in substance evidently addresses itself not to the courtier or

¹ Thus Alexander Gil, head-master of St. Paul's School, in his book, *Logonomia Anglica*, 1621, *Preface*: Huc usque peregrinæ voces in linguâ Anglicâ inauditæ. Tandem circa annum 1400 Galfridus Chaucerus, infausto omine, vocabulis Gallicis et Latinis poësin suam famosam reddidit. The whole passage, which is too long to quote, as indeed the whole book, is curious.

² In his *Testament of Love* he expresses his contempt of Englishmen who would not be content to clothe their thoughts in an English garb: 'Let these clerkes endyten in Latyn, for they have the propertye in science and the knowinge in that facultye, and lette Frenchmen in their Frenche also endyte their queynt termes, for it is kyndly to theyr mouthes; and let us shewe our fantasyes as we learneden of our dames tonge.'

the churchman, but claims to find, as we know it actually found, its proper audience among the commonalty of the realm. Its religious, ecclesiastical, and ethical terminology is abundant, and with rare exceptions is Latin throughout—which, when we keep in mind the opulence in such terms of the earlier Anglo-Saxon, signally attests the havoc which had been wrought during the centuries of depression in all the finer elements of the language. We meet there with ‘abstinence,’ ‘ampulle,’ ‘assoil,’ ‘avarice,’ ‘benigne,’ ‘bountée,’ ‘cardinal vertues,’ ‘conscience,’ ‘charitée,’ ‘chastitée,’ ‘confession,’ ‘consistory,’ ‘contemplatif,’ ‘contrition,’ ‘indulgence,’ ‘leauté,’ ‘mitigation,’ ‘monial,’ ‘recreant,’ ‘relic,’ ‘reverence,’ ‘sanctitée,’ ‘spiritual,’ ‘temporaltee,’ ‘unitée.’ Already we find in *Piers Ploughman* French words which the English language has finally proved unable, or at any rate has declined, to take up into itself, as ‘bienfait,’ ‘brocage,’ ‘chibolles,’ ‘creaunt,’ ‘devoir,’ ‘entremetten,’ ‘fille,’ ‘lo-sengerie;’ ‘mestier,’ ‘pain’ (=bread), ‘prest’ (=prêt). The real difference between Langlande and Chaucer is that the former seems to us, as we read, only to have partially fused into one harmonious whole the two elements whereof the language which he writes is composed; while the mightier artist,—though he too was no mean one,—has brought them into so perfect a chemical combination, that we never pause to consider from what quarter the ore which he has wrought into such current money was extracted, whether from the old mines of the land, or imported from other new ones, opened beyond the sea. But the *Romance of William of Palerne* supplies evidence more remarkable still. Madden puts 1350, nearly half a century earlier

than the *Canterbury Tales*, as about the date of this poem. Here are some of the words which it yields, 'aunter,' 'bacheler,' 'defaute,' 'deraine,' 'digne,' 'duresse,' 'emperice,' 'eritage,' 'facioun,' 'feyntise,' 'hautein,' 'merciabul,' 'mesurabul,' 'paramour,' 'queyntise,' 'scowmfit,' 'travail,' with very many more of like kind.

Other considerations will tend to the abating of the exclusive merit or demerit of Chaucer in this matter. There were other forces beside literature which at this time were helping to saturate English with as much of French as it could healthily absorb. 'It is,' Marsh says, 'a great but very widely spread error, to suppose that the influx of French words in the fourteenth century was due alone to poetry and other branches of pure literature. The law, which now first became organized into a science, introduced very many terms borrowed from the nomenclature of Latin and French jurisprudence; the glass-worker, the enameller, the architect, the brass-founder, the Flemish clothier, and the other handicraftsmen, whom Norman taste and luxury invited, or domestic oppression expelled from the Continent, brought with them the vocabularies of their respective arts; and Mediterranean commerce—which was stimulated by the demand for English wool, then the finest in Europe—imported, from the harbours of a sea where French was the predominant language, both new articles of merchandize and the French designation of them. The sciences too, medicine, physics, geography, alchemy, astrology, all of which became known to England chiefly through French channels, added numerous specific terms to the existing vocabulary, and very many of the words, first

employed in English writings as a part of the technical phraseology of these various arts and knowledges, soon passed into the domain of common life, in modified or untechnical senses, and thus became incorporated into the general tongue of society and of books.'

It is true that there happened here what will happen in every attempt to transplant on a large scale the words of one language into another. The new soil will not prove equally favourable for all. Some will take root and thrive; but others, after a longer or shorter interval, will pine and wither and die. Not all the words which Langlande or Chaucer employed, and for which they stood sponsors, found final allowance with us. At the same time, such an issue as this was no condemnation of their attempt. Nothing but actual proof could show whether the language needed, and would therefore absorb these; or, not needing, would in due time reject them.¹ How little in excess Chaucer in this matter was, how admirable his choice of words, is singularly attested by the fact—I state it on Marsh's authority—that there are not more than a hundred French words used by him, such for example as 'misericorde,' 'malure' (malheur), 'penible,' 'ayel' (aïeul), 'tas,' 'meubles,' 'hautain,' 'cierge,' 'gipon,'

¹ Plautus in the same way uses a multitude of Greek words, which Latin did not want, and therefore refused to absorb; thus, 'clepta,' 'zamia,' 'danista,' 'harpagare,' 'apolactizare,' 'naucleus,' 'strategus,' 'drapeta,' 'morus,' 'morologus,' 'phylaca,' 'malacus,' 'sycophantia,' 'euscheme' (εὐσχήμως), 'dulice' (δουλικῶς), [so 'scymnus' by Lucretius], none of which, I believe, are employed except by him; while others, as 'mastigia' and 'techna,' he shares with Terence. Yet only experience could show that they were superfluous; and it was well done to put them on trial.

‘racine,’ which have failed to win a permanent place among us. I cannot say how many *Piers Ploughman* would yield, but we saw just now that it would yield several; and Gower in like manner—such, for example as ‘feblesse,’ ‘tristesse,’ ‘mestier,’ ‘pelerinage.’ Wiclif would furnish a few, as for instance ‘creansur,’ ‘roue,’ ‘umbre;’ though very far fewer than either of those other; for indeed the non-English element in him, which the language has finally refused to take up, consists not so much of French, as of words which, by him drawn directly from his Latin Vulgate, had been never shaped or moulded in their passage through any intermediate language. Of these the necessities, or if not the necessities, yet the difficulties, of the case drove him to employ not a few, as ‘simulacre,’ ‘sudarie,’ ‘bilibre,’ ‘cyconye,’ ‘argentarie,’ ‘signacle,’ ‘eruke’ (eruca), ‘amfore’ (amphora), ‘architriclyn,’ ‘tymiamie,’ and others.

It is curious to observe to how late a day some of those adoptions from the French kept their ground; which, for all this, they have proved unable to keep to the end. Thus ‘mel’ (Sylvester) struggled hard and long for a place side by side with honey; ‘roy’ with king; this last quite obtaining one in Scotch. It has fared not otherwise with ‘orgule’ (Sir T. Malory), ‘egal’ (Puttenham); with ‘ouvert,’ ‘mot,’ ‘baine,’ ‘mur,’ ‘ecurie,’ ‘sacre,’ ‘baston,’ ‘scantillon,’ ‘siffling,’ ‘livraison,’ ‘pourprise,’ ‘gite,’ ‘to cass,’ ‘dulce,’ ‘aigredulce’ = ‘soursweet’ (all in Holland); with ‘rivage,’ ‘jouissance,’ ‘noblesse,’ ‘tort,’ ‘accoil’ (accueillir), ‘sell’ (=saddle), ‘conge,’ ‘surquedry,’ ‘foy,’ ‘duresse,’ ‘spalles’ (épaules), ‘gree’ (gré), all occurring in Spenser; with ‘outrecuidance;’ with ‘to serr’

(serrer), 'vive,' 'brocage,' 'reglement,' used all by Bacon ; with 'esperance,' 'orgulous' (orgueilleux), 'rondeur,' 'scrimer,' 'amort,' 'maugre,' 'sans' (all in Shakespeare). 'Devoir,' 'dimes,' 'puissance,' 'bruit' (this last used often in our Bible) 'cliquant' (Clarendon), which is not jingling, as Richardson has it, but glistering, were English once ; they are not so any longer. The same holds true of 'volupty' (Sir Thomas Elyot), 'volunty' (Evelyn), 'medisance' (Montagu), 'pucelle' (Ben Jonson), 'petit' (South), 'aveugle,' 'colline' (both in *State Papers*), of 'defailance,' 'plaisance,' 'paysage,' 'pareil' (all in Jeremy Taylor) ; of the verb 'to eloign' (Hacket), and of others, more than I can here enumerate.

But to return. With Chaucer English literature had made a burst, which it was not able to maintain. Dreary days were before it still. Our morning star, he yet ushered in no dawn which was at the point of breaking. Chaucer has by Warton been well compared to some warm bright day in the very early spring, which seems to announce that the winter is over and gone ; but its promise is deceitful ; the full bursting and blossoming of the spring-time is yet far off. The long struggle with France, the hundred years' War, which began so gloriously, but which ended so disastrously, even with the loss of our whole ill-won dominion there, the savagery of our wars of the Roses, wars which were a legacy bequeathed to us by that unrighteous conquest, leave a huge gap in our literary history, nearly a century during which very little was done for the cultivation of our native tongue, few important additions to its wealth were made.

The period, however, is notable as that during

which for the first time we received a large accession of words directly drawn from the Latin. A small settlement of these, for the most part ecclesiastical, had long since found their home in the bosom of the Anglo-Saxon itself, and had been entirely incorporated with it. The fact that we had received our Christianity from Rome, and that Latin was the constant language of the Church, sufficiently accounts for these. Such were 'monk,' 'bishop' (it was not as Greek but as Latin that these words reached us), 'priest,' 'provost,' 'minster,' 'cloister,' 'candle,' 'devil,' 'psalter,' 'mass,' and the names of certain foreign animals, as 'camel,' 'lion,' or plants or other productions, as 'lily,' 'pepper,' 'fig;' which are all, with slightly different spelling, words whose naturalization in England reaches back to a period anterior to the Conquest.¹ These, however, were exceptional, and stood to the main body of the language, not as the Romance element of it does now to the Teutonic, one power over against another, but as the Spanish or Italian or Arabic words in it stand to the remainder of the language, and could not be affirmed to affect it more.

So soon, however, as French words were brought largely into it, and were found to coalesce kindly with the native growths, this very speedily suggested the going straight to the Latin, and drawing directly from it; and thus in the hundred years after Chaucer no small amount of Latin had penetrated, if not into our speech, yet into our books—words not introduced

¹ Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 109; Koch, *Hist. Gramm. der Engl. Sprache*, vol. i. p. 5.

through the French, for they are not, and some of them have at no time been, French ; but yet such as would never have established themselves here, if the French, already domesticated among us, had not prepared their way, bridged over the gulf that would have otherwise been too wide between them and the Saxon vocables of our tongue ; and suggested the models on which these later adoptions should be framed.

They were not for the most part words which it was any gain to acquire. The period was one of great depression of the national spirit ; and nothing sympathizes more intimately with this, rising when it rises, and sinking when it sinks, than does language. Not first at the revival of learning, but already at this time began the attempt to flood the language with pedantic words from the Latin ; take as specimens of these ‘*facundious*,’ ‘*tenebrous*,’ ‘*solacious*,’ ‘*pulcitude*,’ ‘*consuetude*’ (all these occur in Hawes), with a multitude more of the same fashion which the language has long since disallowed ; while others which have maintained their ground, and have deserved to maintain it, were yet employed in numbers quite out of proportion to the native vocables with which they were mingled, and which they altogether overtopped and overshadowed. Chaucer’s hearty English feeling, his thorough sympathy with the people, the fact that, scholar as he was, he was yet the poet not of books but of life, and drew his best inspiration from life, all this had kept him, in the main, clear of this fault. But it was otherwise with those who followed. The diction of Lydgate, Hawes, and the other versifiers,—for to the title of poets they have little or no claim,—who filled up the interval between Chaucer and Surrey, is

immensely inferior to his ; being all stuck over with long and often ill-selected Latin words. The worst offenders in this line, as Campbell himself admits, were the Scotch poets of the fifteenth century. ‘The prevailing fault,’ he says, ‘of English diction, in the fifteenth century, is redundant ornament, and an affectation of anglicising Latin words. In this pedantry and use of “aureate terms” the Scottish versifiers went even beyond their brethren of the south. . . . When they meant to be eloquent, they tore up words from the Latin, which never took root in the language, like children making a mock garden with flowers and branches stuck in the ground, which speedily wither.’¹ It needs but to turn over a few pages of the Scotch poetry of the fifteenth and sixteenth century to find proofs abundant of this. Thus I do not remember to have met ‘to offusk,’ ‘to resplend,’ ‘celsitude,’ ‘preclair,’ ‘lascive,’ ‘venust’ in any English writer, all which, with many more of like kind, may be found in Sibbald’s *Glossary*.

This tendency to latinize our speech received a new impulse from the revival of learning, and the familiar re-acquaintance with the master-pieces of ancient literature which went along with this revival. Happily another movement accompanied, or followed hard on this ; a movement in England essentially national ; and one which stirred our people at far deeper depths of their moral and spiritual life than any mere revival of learning could have ever done ; I refer, of course, to the Reformation. It was only among the Germanic nations of Europe, as has often been remarked,

¹ *Essay on English Poetry*, p. 93.

that the Reformation struck lasting roots ; it found its strength therefore in the Teutonic element of the national character, which also it in turn further strengthened, purified, and called out. And thus, though Latin came in upon us now faster than ever, and to a certain extent also Greek, yet this found redress and counterpoise in the contemporaneous unfolding of the more radically popular side of the language. Popular preaching and discussion, the necessity of dealing with truths the most transcendant in a way to be understood not by scholars only, but by 'idiots' as well, all this served to evoke the native resources of our tongue ; and thus the relative proportion between the one part of the language and the other was not dangerously disturbed, the balance was not destroyed ; as it might easily have been, if only the Humanists had been at work, and not the Reformers as well.

The revival of learning, which made itself first felt in Italy, extended to England, and was operative here, during the reigns of Henry the Eighth and his immediate successors. Having thus slightly anticipated in time, it afterwards ran exactly parallel with, the period during which our Reformation was working itself out. The epoch was in all respects one of immense mental and moral activity, and such epochs never leave a language where they found it. Much in it is changed ; much probably added ; for the old garment of speech, which once served all needs, has grown too narrow, and serves them now no more. The old crust is broken up, and what was obscurely working before forces itself into sight and recognition. 'Change in language is not, as in many natural products, continuous ; it is not equable, but eminently by fits and



starts ;' and when the foundations of the mind of a nation are heaving under the operation of ideas which it is now for the first time making its own, more important changes will follow in fifty years than in two centuries of calmer or more stagnant existence. Thus the activities and energies which the Reformation awakened among us, as they made themselves felt far beyond the domain of our directly religious life, so they did not fail to make themselves effectually felt in this region of language among the rest.¹

The Reformation indeed had a scholarly, we might say a scholastic, as well as a popular, aspect. Add this fact to that of the revived interest in classical

¹ Some lines of Waller reveal to us the sense which in his time scholars had of the rapidity with which the language was changing under their hands. Looking back at changes which the last hundred years had wrought in it, he checked with misgivings such as these his own hope of immortality :

‘ Who can hope his lines should long
Last in a daily changing tongue ?
While they are new, envy prevails,
And as that dies, our language fails.

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‘ Poets that lasting marble seek,
Must carve in Latin or in Greek :
We write in sand ; our language grows,
And like the tide our work o’erflows.’

How his misgivings, which assume that the rate of change would continue what it had been, have been fulfilled, every one knows. The two centuries which have elapsed since he wrote, have hardly antiquated a word or a phrase in his poems. If we care very little for them now, this is owing to quite other causes—to their want of moral earnestness more than to any other.

learning, and you will not wonder that a stream of Latin, now larger than ever, began to flow into our language. Thus Puttenham, writing in Queen Elizabeth's reign,¹ gives a long list of words, some Greek, a few French and Italian, but far the most Latin, which, as he affirms, were of quite recent introduction into the language; and though he may be here and there mistaken about some single word, what he asserts in the main is correct. And yet some of these it is difficult to understand how the language could so long have done without; as 'compendious,' 'delineation,' 'dimension,' 'figurative,' 'function,' 'idiom,' 'impression,' 'indignity,' 'inveigle,' 'method,' 'methodical,' 'metrical,' 'numerous,' 'penetrable,' 'penetrate,' 'prolix,' 'savage,' 'scientific,' 'significative.' All these he adduces with praise. Others, not less commended by him, have failed to hold their ground, as 'placation,' 'numerosity,' 'harmonical.' In his disallowance of 'facundity,' 'implete,' 'attemptat' (attentat), he only anticipated the verdict of a later day. Other words which he condemned no less, as 'audacious,' 'compatible,' 'egregious,' have maintained their ground. These have done the same: 'despicable,' 'destruction,' 'homicide,' 'obsequious,' 'ponderous,' 'portentous,' 'prodigious;' all of them by another writer a little earlier condemned as 'inkhorn terms, smelling too much of the Latin.'

It is curious to note the 'words of art,' as he calls them, which Philemon Holland, a voluminous translator at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the

¹ In his *Art of English Poesy*, London, 1589, republished in Haslewood's *Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy*, London, 1811, vol. i. pp. 122, 123.

seventeenth century, counts it needful to explain in a glossary appended to his translation of Pliny's *Natural History*.¹ One can hardly understand how any who cared to consult the book at all would be perplexed by words like these: 'acrimony,' 'austere,' 'bulb,' 'consolidate,' 'debility,' 'dose,' 'ingredient,' 'opiate,' 'propitious,' 'symptom,' all of which as novelties he carefully explains. Certainly he has words in his glossary harder and more technical than these; but a vast majority present no more serious difficulty than those just adduced.² The Rhemish Bible,

¹ London, 1601. Besides this work Philemon Holland translated the whole of Plutarch's *Moralia*, the *Cyropædia* of Xenophon, Livy, Suetonius, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Camden's *Britannia*. His works make a part of the 'library of dulness' in Pope's *Dunciad*:

'De Lyra there a dreadful front extends,
And here the groaning shelves *Philemon* bends'—

very unjustly; and Southey shows a far juster estimate of his merits, when he finds room for two of these, Plutarch's *Moralia* and Pliny's *Natural History*, in the select library of *The Doctor*. The works which Holland has translated are all more or less important, and his versions of them a mine of genuine idiomatic English, neglected by most of our lexicographers, wrought with eminent advantage by Richardson; but capable of yielding much more than they have yielded yet.

² So too in French it is surprising to find how new are many words, which now constitute an integral part of the language. 'Désintéressement,' 'exactitude,' 'sagacité,' 'bravoure,' were not introduced till late in the seventeenth century. 'Renaissance,' 'emportement,' 'sçavoir-faire,' 'indélébile,' 'désagrément,' were all recent in 1675 (Bouhours); 'indévot,' 'intolérance,' 'impardonnable,' 'irréligieux,' were struggling into allowance at the end of the seventeenth century, and not established

published in 1582, has a table consisting of fifty-five terms 'not familiar to the vulgar reader;' among which are 'acquisition,' 'advent,' 'allegory,' 'co-operate,' 'evangelize,' 'eunuch,' 'holocaust,' 'neophyte,' 'resuscitate,' 'victim.' More than one of these was denounced by the assailants of this Version, as for instance by our own Translators, who say in their *Preface*, 'We have shunned the obscurity of the Papists in the azims, tunicke, rational, holocausts, prepuce, pasche, and a number of such-like, whereof their late translation is full.' It is curious that three

till the beginning of the eighteenth. 'Insidieux' was invented by Malherbe; 'frivolité' is wanting in the earlier editions of the *Dictionary of the Academy*; the Abbé de St.-Pierre was the first to employ 'bienfaisance,' the elder Balzac 'féliciter,' Sarasin 'burlesque,' Rousseau 'investigation' (see *Guesses at Truth*, 1866, p. 220), the Abbé de Pons 'érudit.' Mme. de Sévigné exclaims against her daughter for employing 'effervescence' (Comment dites-vous cela, ma fille? Voilà un mot dont je n'avais jamais ouï parler). 'Démagogue' was first hazarded by Bossuet, and counted so bold a novelty that for long none ventured to follow him in its use. Montaigne introduced 'diversion' and 'enfantillage,' the last not without rebuke from contemporaries. It is a singularly characteristic fact, if he invented, as he is said to have done, 'enjoué.' Desfontaines first employed 'suicide'; Caron gave to the language 'avant-propos,' Ronsard 'avidité,' Joachim Dubellay 'patrie,' Denis Sauvage 'jurisconsulte,' Ménage 'gracieux' (at least so Voltaire affirms) and 'prosateur,' Desportes 'pudeur,' Chapelain 'urbanité,' and Étienne first brought in, apologizing at the same time for the boldness of it, 'analogie,' (si les oreilles françoises peuvent porter ce mot). 'Accaparer' first appeared in the *Dictionary of the Academy* in 1787; 'préliber' (prælibare) is a word of our own day; and Charles Nodier, if he did not coin, yet revived the obsolete 'simplesse.'—See Génin, *Variations du Langage Français*, pp. 308–319.

out of the six which they thus denounce should have kept their place in the language.

The period during which this naturalization of Latin words was going actively forward, extended to the Restoration of Charles the Second, and beyond it. It first received a check from the coming up of French tastes, fashions, and habits of thought consequent on that event. The writers whose style was already formed, such as Cudworth and Barrow, continued still to write their stately sentences, Latin in structure, and Latin in diction, but not so those of a younger generation. We may say of this influx of Latin that it left the language vastly more copious, with greatly enlarged capabilities, but somewhat burdened with its new acquisitions, and not always able to move gracefully under their weight; for, as Dryden has happily said, it is easy enough to acquire foreign words, but to know what to do with them after you have acquired, is the difficulty.

Few, let me here observe by the way, have borne themselves in this hazardous enterprise at once as discreetly and as boldly as Dryden himself has done; who has thus admirably laid down the motives which induced him to look abroad for words with which to enrich his vocabulary, and the principles which guided him in the selection of such: 'If sounding words are not of our growth and manufacture, who shall hinder me to import them from a foreign country? I carry not out the treasure of the nation which is never to return, but what I bring from Italy I spend in England. Here it remains and here it circulates, for, if the coin be good, it will pass from one hand to another. I trade both with the living and the dead,

for the enrichment of our native language. We have enough in England to supply our necessity, but if we will have things of magnificence and splendour, we must get them by commerce. Poetry requires adornment, and that is not to be had from our old Teuton monosyllables ; therefore if I find any elegant word in a classic author, I propose it to be naturalized by using it myself ; and if the public approves of it, the bill passes. But every man cannot distinguish betwixt pedantry and poetry : every man therefore is not fit to innovate. Upon the whole matter a poet must first be certain that the word he would introduce is beautiful in the Latin ; and is to consider in the next place whether it will agree with the English idiom : after this, he ought to take the opinion of judicious friends, such as are learned in both languages ; and lastly, since no man is infallible, let him use this licence very sparingly ; for if too many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives, but to conquer them.’¹

It would indeed have fared ill with the language, if *all* the words which the great writers of this second Latin period proposed as candidates for admission into it, had received the stamp of popular allowance. But happily this was not the case. The re-active energy of the language, enabling it to throw off that which was foreign to it, did not fail to display itself now, as it had done on former occasions ; nor is it

¹ *Dedication of the Translation of the Æneid.* I cannot say that I have observed very many of these words there. ‘Irre-meable’ (*Æn.* vi. 575) is the only one which I could adduce at the instant.

too much to affirm that in almost every instance, during this period, where the Alien Act was enforced, the sentence of banishment was a just one. Either the word violated the analogy of the language, or was not intelligible, or was not needed, or looked ill, or sounded ill; or some other valid reason existed for its exclusion. A lover of his native tongue might well tremble to think what this tongue would have become, if all the innumerable vocables introduced or endorsed by illustrious names, had been admitted to a free course among us on the strength of their recommendation; if 'torve' and 'tetric' (Fuller), 'cecity' (Hooker), 'fastide' and 'trutinate' (*State Papers*), 'immanity' (Shakespeare), 'insulse' and 'insulsity' (Milton, prose), 'scelestick' (Feltham), 'splendidious' (Drayton), 'pervicacy' (Baxter), 'stramineous,' 'ardelion' (Burton), 'lepid,' 'sufflamine' (Barrow), 'facinorous' (Donne), 'immorigerous,' 'funest,' 'clancular,' 'ferity,' 'ustulation,' 'stultiloquy,' 'lipothymy' (λειποθυμία), 'hyperaspist,' 'deturpate,' 'intenerate,' 'effigiate' (all in Jeremy Taylor), if 'mulierosity,' 'subsannation,' 'coaxation,' 'ludibundness,' 'delinition,' 'illaqueation,' 'sanguinolency,' 'septemfluos,' 'medioxumous,' 'mirificent,' 'palmiferous' (all in Henry More), 'pauciloquy,' 'multiloquy' (Beaumont, *Psyche*); if 'dyscolous' (Foe), 'ataraxy' (Allestree), 'moliminously' (Cudworth), 'luciferously,' 'meticulous,' 'lapidifical,' 'exenteration,' 'farraginous' (Sir Thomas Browne), 'immarcescible' (Bishop Hall), 'exility,' 'spinosity,' 'incolumity,' 'solertiousness,' 'lucripetous,' 'inopious,' 'eximious,' 'eluctate' (all in Hacket), 'arride' (ridiculed by Ben Jonson), with hundreds of other births, as monstrous or more

monstrous than are some of these, had not been rejected and disallowed by the sound linguistic instincts of the national mind.

Many words too *were* actually adopted, but not precisely as they had been first introduced among us. They were compelled to drop their foreign termination, or whatever else indicated them as strangers, to conform themselves to English ways, and only thus were finally incorporated into the great family of English.¹ Thus of Greek words take the following: 'pyramis' and 'pyramides,' forms often employed by Shakespeare ('pyramises' in Jeremy Taylor), became 'pyramid' and 'pyramids;' 'dosis' (Bacon) 'dose;' 'aspis' (Latimer) 'asp;' 'distichon' 'distich' (Holland), 'aristocratia' and 'democratia' (North) 'aristocracy' and 'democracy;' 'hemistichion' (the same) 'hemistich;' 'apogæon' (Fairfax), or 'apogeum' (Browne), 'apogee;' 'sumphonia' (Lodge) 'symphony;' 'myrrha' (Golding) 'myrrh;' 'prototypon' (Jackson) 'prototype;' 'synonymon' (Jeremy Taylor) or 'synonymum' (Hacket), and 'synonyma' (Milton, prose), became severally 'synonym' and 'synonyms;' 'parallelon' (North) 'parallel;' 'syntaxis' (Fuller) became 'syntax;' 'extasis' (Burton) 'ecstasy;' 'parallelogrammon' (Holland) 'parallelogram;' 'hypotenusa' (the same); 'programma' (Warton) 'program;' 'epitheton' (Cowell) 'epithet;' 'epocha' (South) 'epoch;' 'disenteria' and 'epilepsis' (both in Sylvester) 'dysentery' and 'epilepsy;' 'biographia'

¹ J. Grimm (*Wörterbuch*, p. xxvi.): Fällt von ungefähr ein fremdes Wort in den Brunnen einer Sprache, so wird es so lange darin umgetrieben, bis es ihre Farbe annimmt, und seiner fremden Art zum Trotze wie ein Heimisches aussieht.

(Dryden) 'biography;' 'apostata' (Massinger) 'apostate;' 'despota' (Foxy) 'despot;' 'misanthropos' (Shakespeare, cf. 'misanthropi,' Bacon) 'misanthrope;' 'psalterion' (North) 'psaltery;' 'idylion' (Spenser), or 'idyllium' (Dryden), 'idyl;' 'ostracismos' (North) 'ostracism;' 'chasma' (Henry More) 'chasm;' 'idioma' and 'prosodia' (both in Daniel, prose) 'idiom' and 'prosody;' 'energia' (Sidney) 'energy,' 'Sibylla' (Bacon) 'Sibyl;' 'zoophyton' (Henry More) 'zoophyte;' 'enthousiasmos' (Sylvester) 'enthusiasm;' 'phantasma' (Shakespeare) 'phantasm;' 'paraphrasis' (Ascham) 'paraphrase;' 'magnes' (Gabriel Harvey) 'magnet;' 'cynosura' (Donne) 'cynosure;' 'galaxias' (Foxy) 'galaxy;' 'heros' (Henry More) 'hero.'

The same process has gone on in a multitude of Latin words, which testify by their terminations that they were, and were felt to be, Latin at their first employment; though now they are such no longer. It will be seen that in this list I include Greek words which came to us through the medium of the Latin, and bearing a Latin termination. Thus Bacon has 'insecta' for 'insects;' 'æquinocia' for 'equinoxes;' 'chylus' for 'chyle;' Coverdale 'tetrarcha' for 'tetrarch;' Latimer 'basiliscus' for 'basilisk;' Frith 'syllogismus' for 'syllogism;' Bishop Andrews 'nardus' for 'nard;' Milton 'asphaltus' for 'asphalt;' Clarendon 'classis' for 'class;' Spenser 'zephyrus' for 'zephyr.' So too 'dactylus' (Ascham) preceded 'dactyle;' 'interstitium' (Fuller) 'interstice;' 'philtrum' (Culverwell) 'philtre;' 'depositum' (Howe) 'deposit,' 'prædicatum' 'predicate,' 'subjectum' 'subject' (both in North); 'mandatum' (Holinshed) 'mandate;' 'hexametrum' (Ascham) 'hexameter;'

‘expansum’ (Jeremy Taylor) ‘expanse ;’ ‘vestigium’ (Culverwell) ‘vestige ;’ ‘preludium’ (Beaumont, *Psyche*) ‘prelude ;’ ‘precipitium’ (Coryat) ‘precipice ;’ ‘aconitum’ and ‘balsamum’ (both in Shakespeare) ‘aconite’ and ‘balsam ;’ ‘heliotropium’ (Holland) ‘heliotrope ;’ ‘helleborum’ (North) ‘hellebore ;’ ‘vehiculum’ (Howe) ‘vehicle ;’ ‘trochæus’ and ‘spondæus’ (Holland) ‘trochee’ and ‘spondee ;’ ‘trophæum’ (Holland) ‘trophy ;’ ‘transitus’ (Howe) ‘transit ;’ and ‘machina’ (Henry More) ‘machine.’ We meet ‘intervalla,’ not ‘intervals,’ in Chillingworth ; ‘postulata,’ not ‘postulates,’ in Swift ; ‘archiva,’ not ‘archives,’ in Baxter ; ‘atomi,’ not ‘atoms,’ in Lord Brooke ; ‘adulti,’ not ‘adults,’ in Rogers ; ‘plebeiï,’ not ‘plebeians,’ in Shakespeare ; ‘helotæ,’ not ‘helots,’ in Holland ; ‘triumviri,’ not ‘triumvirs,’ and ‘ephori,’ not ‘ephors,’ in North ; ‘demagogi,’ not ‘demagogues,’ in Hacket ; ‘elegi,’ not ‘elegies,’ and ‘rhythmi,’ not ‘rhythms,’ in Holland ; ‘pantomimus’ in Lord Bacon and Ben Jonson for ‘pantomime ;’ ‘mystagogus’ for ‘mystagogue,’ in Jackson and Henry More. In like manner, ‘ædilis’ (North) went before ‘edile ;’ ‘obeliscus’ (the same) before ‘obelisk ;’ ‘effigies’ and ‘statua’ (both in Shakespeare) before ‘effigy’ and ‘statue ;’ ‘abyssus’ (Jackson) before ‘abyss ;’ ‘postscripta’ (*State Papers*) before ‘postscript ;’ ‘commentarius’ (Chapman) before ‘commentary ;’ ‘vestibulum’ (Howe) before ‘vestibule ;’ ‘symbolum’ (Hammond) before ‘symbol ;’ ‘spectrum’ (Burton) before ‘spectre ;’ while only after a while ‘quære’ gave place to ‘query ;’ ‘audite’ (Hacket) to ‘audit ;’ ‘plaudite’ (Henry More) to ‘plaudit ;’ ‘remanent’ (*Paston Letters*) to ‘remnant ;’ and the Low Latin

'mumma' (Webster) became 'mummy.' The change of 'innocency,' 'indolency,' 'temperancy,' and the large family of words with the same termination, into 'innocence,' 'indolence,' 'temperance,' and the like, is part of the same process of completed naturalization. So too it is curious to note how slowly the names of persons, things, and countries, drop their Greek or Latin, and assume an English form, as little by little our literature familiarizes itself with the old Greek and Roman world. Aristotle indeed had so lived through the Middle Ages that we nowhere find his name in any but this popular shape; but Ascham speaks of 'Hesiodus,' Bacon of 'Sallustius,' 'Appianus,' 'Livius,' Milton of 'Pindarus,' and this both in prose and verse; Spenser of the 'Ilias' and 'Odysseis,' and Dryden, though not indeed always, of the 'Æneis.' It is the same with places and countries. North writes 'the mountains Pyrenei,' 'Creta,' 'Antiochia,' 'Troia,' 'Academia,' 'Syracusæ,' 'the sea Atlanticum,' 'the sea Euxinum,' Ascham 'Sicilia,' Milton 'Danubius,' Coverdale 'Nilus,' Holland 'Tiberis,' while our English Bible has 'Palestina,' 'Grecia,' and 'Tyrus.'

The plural very often tells the secret of the foreign light in which a word is still regarded, when the singular, being less capable of modification, would have failed to do this. Thus when Holland writes 'chori,' 'phalanges,' 'bisontes,' 'archontes,' 'sphinges,' 'ideæ,' 'musæa,' it is clear that 'chorus,' 'phalanx,' 'bison,' 'archon,' 'sphinx,' 'idea,' 'museum,' had in no sense become English for him; so too 'rhinoceros' was Greek for Purchas, when he wrote 'rhinocerotes' for the plural; 'dogma' for Hammond, and 'enigma' for John Smith, when they made 'dogmata' and 'enigmata'

severally the plurals of these. Spenser, using 'heroës' as a trisyllable,¹ plainly implies that it is not yet thoroughly English for him; indeed, as we have just seen, the singular was 'heros' half a century later. 'Cento' is no English word, but a Latin one used in English, so long as the plural is not 'centos,' but 'centones,' as in the old anonymous translation of Augustin's *City of God*; 'specimen' in like manner is Latin, so long as it owns the plural 'specimina' (Howe); so too 'asylum,' so long as its plural is 'asylla,' as in Clarendon it is. Pope employing 'satellites' as a quadrisyllable—

'Why Jove's *satellites* are less than Jove'—

intimates that it is still Latin for him; just as 'terminus,' which the necessities of railways have introduced among us, will not be truly naturalized till it has 'terminuses,' and not 'termini' for a plural; nor 'phenomenon,' till we have renounced 'phenomena;' nor 'crisis,' while it makes 'crises.' Sometimes both plurals have been retained, with only the assignment of different meanings to them, as in the case of 'indices' and 'indexes,' of 'genii' and 'geniuses,' of 'stamina' and 'stamens' (botanical).

The same process has gone on with words from other languages, as from the Italian and the Spanish; thus 'bandetto' (Shakespeare), or 'bandito' (Jeremy Taylor), becomes 'bandit;' 'porcellana' (Fuller) becomes 'porcelain;' 'ruffiano' (Coryat) 'ruffian;' 'concerto' 'concert;' 'busto' (Lord Chesterfield)

¹ 'And old *heroës*, which their world did daunt.'

Sonnet on Scanderbeg.

‘bust;’ ‘caricatura’ (the same) ‘caricature;’ ‘princessa’ (Hacket) ‘princess;’ ‘scaramucha’ (Dryden) ‘scaramouch;’ ‘pedante’ (Bacon) ‘pedant;’ ‘pedanteria’ (Sidney) ‘pedantry;’ ‘mascarata’ (Hacket) ‘masquerade;’ ‘impresa’ ‘impress;’ ‘caprichio’ (Shakespeare) becomes first ‘caprich’ (Butler), then ‘caprice;’ ‘duello’ (Shakespeare) ‘duel;’ ‘alligarta’ (Ben Jonson) ‘alligator;’ ‘parroquito’ (Webster) ‘parroquet.’ Not otherwise ‘scalada’ (Heylin) or ‘escalado’ (Holland) becomes ‘escalade;’ ‘granada’ (Hacket) ‘grenade;’ ‘parada’ (Jeremy Taylor) ‘parade;’ ‘emboscado’ (Holland), ‘stoccado,’ ‘barricado,’ ‘renegado,’ ‘hurricano’ (all in Shakespeare), ‘brocado’ (Hackluyt), ‘palissado’ (Howell), these all drop their foreign terminations, and severally become ‘ambuscade,’ ‘stockade,’ ‘barricade,’ ‘renegade,’ ‘hurricane,’ ‘brocade,’ ‘palisade;’ ‘croisado’ (Bacon) in like manner becomes first ‘croisade’ (Jortin), and then ‘crusade;’ ‘quinaquina’ or ‘quinquina,’ ‘quinine.’ Other modifications of spelling, not always in the termination, but in the body of a word, will indicate its more entire incorporation into the English language. Thus ‘shash,’ a Turkish word, becomes ‘sash;’ ‘tulippa’ (Bacon) ‘tulip;’ ‘quelques choses,’ ‘kickshaws;’ ‘restoration’ was at first spelt ‘restauration;’ and so long as ‘vicinage’ was spelt ‘voisinage’¹ (Sanderson), ‘mirror’ ‘miroir’ (Fuller), ‘recoil’ ‘recule,’ ‘voyage’ ‘viage,’ and ‘career’ ‘carriere’ (all by Holland), they could scarcely be esteemed the thoroughly English words which now they have become.

¹ Skinner (*Etymologicon*, 1671) protests against the word altogether, as purely French, and having no right to be considered English at all.

Here and there even at this later period awkward foreign words will have been recast in a more thoroughly English mould ; 'chirurgion,' used as late as by South, will become 'surgeon ;' 'hemorrhoid' 'emerod ;' 'squiancy,' first 'squinzey' (Jeremy Taylor), and then 'quinsey ;' 'porkpisce' (Spenser), or hogfish, will be 'porpesse,' and then 'porpoise,' as now. Yet the attempt will not always be successful. 'Physiognomy' will not give place to 'visnomy,' though Spenser and Shakespeare employ this familiar form ; nor 'hippopotamus' to 'hippodame' at Spenser's bidding ; nor 'avant-courier' to 'vancurrier' at Shakespeare's. Other words also have finally refused to take a more popular shape, although such was current once. Chaucer wrote 'sawter' and 'sawtrie,' but we 'psalter' and 'psaltery ;' Holland 'cirque,' revived by Keats, but we 'circus ;' 'cense,' but we 'census ;' 'interreign,' but we 'interregnum ;' Sylvester 'cest,' but we 'cestus ;' 'quirry,' but we 'equerry ;' 'colosse' (so also Henry More), but we 'colossus ;' Golding 'ure,' but we 'urus ;' 'metropole,' but we 'metropolis ;' Dampier 'volcan,' but this has not superseded 'volcano ;' nor 'pagod' (Pope) 'pagoda ;' nor 'skelet' (Holland) 'skeleton ;' nor 'stimule' (Stubbs) 'stimulus.' Bolingbroke wrote 'exode,' but we hold fast to 'exodus ;' Burton 'funge,' but we 'fungus ;' Henry More 'enigm,' but we 'enigma ;' and 'analyse,' but we 'analysis.' 'Superfice' (Dryden) has not put 'superficies,' nor 'sacrary' (Hacket) 'sacrarium,' nor 'limbeck' 'alembic,' out of use. Chaucer's 'potecary' has given place to a more Greek formation, 'apothecary ;' so has 'ancre' to 'anchorite,' 'auntre' to 'adventure.' But these are exceptions ; the set of language is all in the other direction.

Looking at this process of the reception of foreign words, with their after assimilation in feature to our own, we may trace a certain conformity between the genius of our institutions and that of our language. It is the very character of our institutions to repel none, but rather to afford a shelter and a refuge to all, from whatever quarter they come ; and after a longer or shorter while all the strangers and incomers have been incorporated into the English nation, within one or two generations have forgotten that they were ever extraneous to it, have retained no other reminiscence of their foreign extraction than some slight difference of name, and that often disappearing or having disappeared. Exactly so has it been with the English language. No language has shown itself less exclusive ; none has stood less upon niceties ; none has thrown open its doors wider, with a fuller confidence that it could make truly its own, assimilate and subdue to itself, whatever it received into its bosom ; and in none has this confidence been more fully justified by the result.

Such are the two great augmentations from without of our vocabulary. All other are minor and subordinate. Thus the Italian influence has been far more powerful on our literature than on our language. In Chaucer it makes itself very strongly felt on the former,¹ but very slightly upon the latter ; and, as compared with that of French, it may be counted as none at all. And this remained very much the condition of things for the whole period during which

¹ See Kessner, *Chaucer in seinen Beziehungen zur Italienischen Literatur*, Bonn, 1867.

the star of Italy was in the ascendant here. When we consider how potent its influences were, and how long they lasted, it is only surprising that the deposit left in the language has not been larger. There was a time when Italian was far more studied in England, and Italian books far more frequently translated, than they are at this present. Thus Ascham complains of the immense number of wicked Italian books, such as those of that 'poisonous Italian ribald,' Aretine, which were rendered into English;¹ and it is not less abundantly evident that for a period extending from the reign of Henry the Eighth to the end of that of Elizabeth, it more concerned an accomplished courtier and man of the world to be familiar with Italian than with French.

Almost every page of Spenser bears witness to his intimate acquaintance with Ariosto, and with his own contemporary, Tasso. His sonnets are 'amoretti.' In the choice of names for persons in his *Fairy Queen*, such as Orgoglio, Archimago, Braggadocchio, Grantorto, Malbecco, Fradubio, Gardante, Parlante, Jocante, Fidessa, Duessa, Despetto, Decetto, Defetto, Speranza, Humiltà, and the like, he assumes the same familiarity with the language of Italy on the part of his readers. He introduces words purely Italian, as 'basciomani' (handkissings), 'capuccio' (hood), or only not Italian, because clipped of their final letter, as 'maltalent' for ill will, 'intendiment' for understanding, 'forniment' for furniture; or words formed on Italian models, as 'to aggrate' (aggratare), and sometimes only intelligible when referred to their

¹ *The Schoolmaster*, edited by Rev. J. E. Mayor, 1863, p. 82.

Italian source, as 'to affret' (= to encounter), from 'affrettare,' 'to affrap,' the Italian 'affrappare;' or words employed not in our sense, but altogether in an Italian, as 'to revolt' in that of 'rivoltare' (*F. Q.* iii. 11, 25).

Milton in his prose works frequently avouches the peculiar affection to the Italian literature and language which he bore, so that, next to those of Greece and of Rome, he was most addicted to these. And his poetry without such declarations would itself attest the same. He too calls his poems by Italian names, '*L'Allegro*,' '*Il Penseroso*.' His diction is enriched with Italian words, as 'gonfalon,' 'libecchio,' or with words formed on Italian models, as 'to imparadise,' which beautiful word, however, was not of his invention; he employs words in their Italian, not their English acceptation; thus 'to assassinate,' not as to kill, but grievously to maltreat. His adjectival use of 'adorn,' as equivalent to 'adorned,' he must have justified by the Italian 'adorno;' so too his employment of 'to force' in that of 'sforzare,' to vanquish or reduce (*S. A.* 1096). His orthography, departing from the usual, approximates to the Italian; thus he writes 'ammiral' (ammiraglio) for admiral, 'haralt' (araldo) for herald, 'gonfalon' for gonfanon, 'sovrán' (sovrano) for sovereign; 'desertrice' (prose) where another would have written 'desertress.' 'Soldan,' for sultan, he has in common with others who went before him; so too 'to 'sdeign,' a form no doubt suggested by the Italian 'sdegnare.'

Jeremy Taylor's acquaintance with Italian, even if it were not asserted in his *Funeral Sermon*, with his assumption of the same acquaintance on the part of

his readers, is testified by his frequent use of Italian proverbs and Italian words. He sometimes gives these an English shape, as 'to picqueer' in the sense of to skirmish ; but oftener leaves them in their own. It would be easy to gather out of his writings a considerable collection of these ; such as 'amorevolezza,' 'grandezza,' 'sollevamento,' 'avisamente,' 'miserabili' in the sense of the French 'misérables,' 'incurabili' (can it be that 'incurables' was in his time wanting in our language ?) ; while, scattered up and down our literature of the first half of the seventeenth century, we meet other Italian words not a few ; as 'farfalla,' for butterfly ; 'amorevolous,' 'mascarata,' 'gratioso' (= favourite), 'bugiard' (= liar), all in Hacket, 'leggiadrous,' in Beaumont's *Psyche* and elsewhere. A list, as complete as I could make it, of such as have finally obtained a place in the language was given in my first lecture ;¹ they are above a hundred, and doubtless many have escaped me.

There is abundant evidence that Spanish was during the latter half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century very widely known in England, indeed far more familiar than it ever since has been. The wars in the Low Countries, in which so many of our countrymen served, the probabilities at one period of a royal match with Spain, the fact that Spanish was almost as serviceable at Brussels, at Milan, at Naples, and for a time at Vienna, not to speak of Lima and Mexico, as at Madrid itself, and scarcely less indispensable, the many points of contact, friendly and hostile, of England with Spain for well-nigh a century,

¹ See p. 15.

all this had conduced to a wide-spread acquaintance with Spanish in England. It was popular at court. Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth were both excellent Spanish scholars. A passage in Howell's *Letters* would imply that at the time of Prince Charles' visit to Madrid, his Spanish was imperfect, and Clarendon affirms the same ; but at a later date, that is in 1635, a Spanish play was acted by a Spanish company before him. The statesmen and scholars of the time were rarely ignorant of the language. We might have confidently presumed Raleigh's acquaintance with it ; but in his *Discovery of Guiana* and other writings there is abundant proof of this. Lord Bacon gives similar evidence, in the Spanish proverbs which he quotes, and in the happy employment which he sometimes makes of a Spanish word, where the English does not offer an equivalent, as of 'desenvoltura' in his Essay, *Of Fortune*. It was among the many accomplishments of Archbishop Williams, who, when the Spanish match was pending, caused the English Liturgy to be translated under his own eye into Spanish. Whether Shakespeare's knowledge of the language was not limited to the few chance words which occasionally he introduces, as 'palabras,' 'passado,' 'duello,' it is difficult to say. But Jonson's familiarity with it is evident. More than once, as in *The Alchemist* (Act iv. Sc. 2), he introduces so large an amount of Spanish that he must have assumed this would not be altogether strange to his audience. Of the Spanish words which have effected a settlement in English, so far as I know them, I have given a list already.¹

¹ See page 16.

The introduction of French tastes by Charles the Second and his courtiers returning from their enforced residence abroad, rather modified the structure of our sentences than seriously affected our vocabulary; yet it gave us some new words. In one of Dryden's plays, *Marriage à la Mode*, a lady shows her affectation by constantly employing French idioms in preference to English, French words rather than native. Curiously enough, of these, thus put into her mouth to render her ridiculous, several, as 'repartee,' 'grimace,' 'chagrin,' to be in the 'good graces' of another, are excellent English now, and have nothing far-sought or affected about them: for so it frequently proves that what is laughed at in the beginning, is by all admitted and allowed at the last. 'Fougue' and 'fraisheur' which Dryden himself employed—being, it is true, a very rare offender in this line, and for 'fraisheur,' having Scotch if not English authority—have not been justified by the same success.

Nor indeed can it be said that this adoption and naturalization of foreign words has ever wholly ceased. There are periods, as we have seen, when a language throws open its doors, and welcomes strangers with an especial freedom; but there is never a time, when one by one these foreigners and strangers are not slipping into it. The process by which they do this eludes for the most part our observation. Time, the greatest of all innovators, manages his innovations so dexterously, spreads them over periods so immense, and is thus able to bring them about so gradually, that often, while he is effecting the mightiest changes, we have no suspicion that he is effecting any at all. Thus how nearly imperceptible are the steps by which

a foreign word is admitted into the full rights of an English one. Many Greek words, for example, quite unchanged in form, have in one way or another ended in obtaining a home and acceptance among us. We may in almost every instance trace step by step the stealthy naturalization of these. We may note them spelt for a while in Greek letters, and avowedly employed as Greek and not English vocables. Having thus won a certain allowance, and ceased to be altogether unfamiliar, we note them next exchanging Greek for English letters, and finally obtaining recognition as words which, however drawn from a foreign source, are yet themselves English. Thus 'acme,' 'apotheosis,' 'chrysalis,' 'criterion,' 'dogma,' 'encyclopædia,' 'euthanasia,' 'hyphen,' 'iota,' 'metropolis,' 'ophthalmia,' 'phenomenon,' 'pathos,' are all English now, while yet South with many others always wrote ἀκμή, Jeremy Taylor writes ἀποθέωσις, εὐθανασία, ἰῶτα, Cudworth κριτήριον, Henry More χρυσαλίς, Holland ὑφέν; Hammond speaks of δόγματα, Ben Jonson of 'the knowledge of the liberal arts, which the Greeks call ἐγκυκλοπαιδείαν,'¹ Culverwell writes μητρόπολις and ὀφθαλμία, Preston φαινόμενα, Sylvester ascribes to Baxter not 'pathos' but πάθος.² ἦθος is at the pre-

¹ He is not perfectly accurate here; the Greeks spoke of ἐν κύκλῳ παιδεία and ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία, but had no such compound word as ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία. We gather, however, from his statement, as from Lord Bacon's use of 'circle-learning,' (= 'orbis doctrinæ,' Quintilian), that 'encyclopædia' did not exist in their time. 'Monomania' is in like manner a modern formation, of which the Greek language knows nothing.

² See the passages quoted in my paper, *On some Deficiencies*

sent moment preparing for this passage from Greek characters to English, and certainly before long will be acknowledged as English. The only cause which for some time past has stood in the way of this is the misgiving whether it will not be read 'ěthos,' and not 'ēthos,' and thus not be the word intended.

Let us endeavour to trace this same process in some French word, which is at this moment gaining a footing among us. For 'prestige' we have manifestly no equivalent of our own. It expresses something which only by a long circumlocution we could express; namely, that real though undefinable influence on others, which past successes, as the pledge and promise of future ones, breed. It has thus naturally passed into frequent use. No one could feel that in employing it he was slighting as good a word of our own. At first all used it avowedly as French, writing it in italics to indicate this. Some write it so still, others do not; some, that is, count it still as foreign, others consider that it is not so to be regarded any more.¹ Little by little the number of those who write

in our English Dictionaries, p. 38, published separately, and in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1857.

¹ We trace a similar progress in Greek words which were passing into Latin. Thus Cæsar (*B. G.* iii. 103) writes, quæ Græci ἄδυνα appellant; but Horace (*Carm.* i. 16. 5), non adytis quatit. Cicero writes ἀντίποδες (*Acad.* ii. 39. 123), but Seneca (*Ep.* 122), 'antipodes;' that is, the word for Cicero was still Greek, while in the period that elapsed between him and Seneca, it had become Latin. So too Cicero has εἶδωλον, but the Younger Pliny 'idolon,' and Tertullian 'idolum;' Cicero στρατήγημα (*N. D.* 3. 6), but Valerius Maximus 'strategema.'

it in italics will diminish; and finally none will do so. It will then only need that the accent be shifted as far back as it will go, for such is the instinct of all English words, that for 'prestige,' it should be pronounced 'préstige,' even as within these few years for 'depót' we have learned to say 'dépot,' and its naturalization will be complete. I have no doubt that before many years it will be so pronounced by the majority of educated Englishmen,—some pronounce it so already,—and that the pronunciation common now will pass away, just as 'obleege,' once universal, has everywhere given place to 'oblige.'¹

I observe in passing, that the process of throwing the accent of a word as far back as it will go, is one which has been constantly proceeding among us. In the time and writings of Chaucer there was much vacillation in the placing of the accent; as was to be expected, while the adoptions from the French were comparatively recent, and had not yet unlearned their foreign ways or made themselves perfectly at home among us. Some of his French words are still accented on the final syllable, thus 'honoúr,' 'créature,' 'senténcé,' 'penáncé,' 'beauté,' 'manére,' 'servíce;' others, as 'trésour,' 'cólour,' 'cónseil,' on the first; while this vacillation displays itself still more markedly in the fact that the same word is accented by him sometimes on the one syllable, and sometimes upon the other; he writing at one time 'natúre' and at another 'náture,' at one time 'vertúe' and at another

¹ See in Coleridge's *Table Talk*, p. 3, the amusing story of John Kemble's stately correction of the Prince of Wales for adhering to the earlier pronunciation, 'obleege,'—'It will become your royal mouth better to say oblige.'

‘vértue ;’ so too ‘visage’ and ‘viságe,’ ‘fórtune’ and ‘fortúne ;’ ‘sérvice’ and ‘servíce,’ with many more. The same disposition to throw back the accent is visible in later times. Thus ‘preságe,’ ‘captíve,’ ‘envý,’ ‘cruél,’ ‘trespáss,’ ‘forést,’ in Spenser, and these, ‘comráde,’ ‘prostráte,’ ‘advérse,’ ‘aspéct,’ ‘procéss,’ ‘instínt,’ ‘insúlt,’ ‘impúlse,’ ‘pretéxt,’ ‘contríte,’ ‘surfáce,’ ‘prodúct,’ ‘upróar,’ ‘edíct,’ ‘contést,’ in Milton, had all their accent once on the last syllable ; they have it now on the first. So too, ‘théatre’ was ‘theátre’ with Sylvester, this American pronunciation being archaic and not vulgar ; while ‘acádemy’ was ‘académy’ for Cowley and for Butler.¹ ‘Próduce’ was ‘prodúce’ for Dryden ; ‘éssay’ was ‘essáy’ both for him and for Pope ; he closes heroic lines with one and the other of these substantives ; Pope does the same with ‘barriér’² and ‘effórt.’ We may note the same process going forward still. Middle-aged men may remember that it was a question in their youth whether it should be ‘revénue’ or ‘révenue ;’ it is always ‘révenue’ now. ‘Contémplate’ has in like manner given way to ‘cóntemplate.’ Samuel Rogers bewailed the change which had taken place in his memory from ‘balcóny’ to ‘bálcony.’ ‘Bálcony,’ he complains, ‘makes me sick ;’ but it has effectually won the day. Nor is it, I think, difficult to explain how this should be. The speaker, conscious that somewhere or other the effort must be made, is glad to have it over as soon as possible. ‘Apostólic,’ which in Dryden’s use was ‘apóstolic’ (he ends an

¹ ‘In this great *académy* of mankind.’

To the Memory of Du Val.

² ‘’Twixt that and reason what a nice *barriér*.’

heroic line with it), is a rare instance of the accent moving in the opposite direction.

Other French words not a few, besides 'prestige' which I instanced just now, are at this moment hovering on the confines of English, hardly knowing whether they shall become such altogether or not. Such are 'ennui,' 'exploitation,' 'verve,' 'persiflage,' 'badinage,' 'chicane,' 'finesse,' 'mêlée' (Tennyson already spells it 'mellay'), and others. All these are often employed by us,—and it is out of such frequent employment that adoption proceeds,—because expressing shades of meaning not expressed by any words of our own. Some of them will no doubt complete their naturalization; others will after a time retreat again, like some which were named just now, and become for us once more avowedly French. 'Solidarity,' which we owe to the French Communists,—it signifies a fellowship in gain and loss, in honour and dishonour, in victory and defeat, a being, so to speak, all in the same boat,—is so convenient that it would be idle to struggle against it. It has established itself in German, and in other European languages as well. 'Banality,' by Robert Browning recently proposed for admission, will scarcely succeed as well.

Or take an example of this progressive naturalization from another quarter. In an English glossary, of date 1671, I do not find 'tea,' but 'cha,' which is thus defined, 'the leaf of a tree in China, which being infused into water, serves for their ordinary drink.' Thirteen years later the word is no longer a Chinese, but already a French one for us; Locke in his *Diary* writing it 'thé.' Early in the next century the word

is spelt in an entirely English fashion, in fact as we spell it now, but still retains a foreign pronunciation,—Pope rhymes it with ‘obey,’—and this it has only lately altogether let go.

Greek and Latin words we still continue to adopt, although now no longer in troops and companies, but only one by one. The lively interest which always has been felt in classical studies among us, and which will continue to be felt, so long as Englishmen present to themselves a high culture of their faculties and powers as an object of ambition, so long as models of what is truest and loveliest in art have any attraction for them, is itself a pledge that accessions from these quarters can never cease altogether. I refer not here to purely scientific terms ; these, so long as they do not pass beyond the threshold of the science for whose use they were invented, have no proper right to be called words at all. They are a kind of shorthand, or algebraic notation of the science to which they belong ; and will find no place in a dictionary constructed upon true principles, but will be left to constitute a technical dictionary by themselves. They are oftentimes drafted into a dictionary of the language ; but this for the most part out of a barren ostentation, and that so there may be room for boasting of the many thousand words by which it surpasses all its predecessors. But such additions are very cheaply made. Nothing is easier than to turn to modern treatises on chemistry or electricity, or on some other of the sciences which hardly existed, or did not at all exist, half a century ago, or which—like botany—have been in later times wholly new-named, and to transplant new terms from these by the

hundred and the thousand, with which to crowd and deform the pages of a dictionary. The labour is little more than that of transcription ; but the gain is nought ; or indeed is much less than nought ; for it is not merely that half a dozen genuine English words recovered from our old authors would be a truer gain, a more real advance toward the complete inventory of the wealth which we possess in words than a hundred or a thousand of these ; but additions of this kind merely load and disfigure the work which they profess to complete.

When we call to mind the near affinity between English and German, which, if not sisters, are at any rate first cousins, it is remarkable that almost since the day when they parted company, each to fulfil its own destiny, there has been little further commerce, little giving or taking, between them. Adoptions on our part from the German have been extremely rare. The explanation of this lies no doubt in the fact that the literary activity of Germany did not begin till very late, nor our interest in it till later still, not indeed till the beginning of the present century. Literature, however, is not the only channel by which words pass from one language to another ; thus ‘plunder’ was brought back from Germany about the beginning of our Civil War by the soldiers who had served under Gustavus Adolphus and his captains ; while ‘trigger,’ which reached us at the same time, and by the same channel, is manifestly the German ‘drücker’ (‘tricker’ in *Hudibras*), though none of our dictionaries have marked it as such. ‘Crikesman’ (‘kriegsmann’), common enough in the *State Papers* of the sixteenth century, found no permanent place in the language ;

and 'brandshat' ('brandschatz'), being the ransom paid to an enemy for *not* burning down your house or your city, as little. 'Iceberg' we must have taken whole from the German, since a word of our own construction would have been not 'ice-*berg*,' but 'ice-*mountain*.' I have not met with it in our earlier voyagers. An English 'swindler' is not exactly a German 'schwindler;' yet a subaudition of the knave, though more latent in German, is common to both; and we must have drawn the word from Germany (it is not in Johnson), late in the last century. Why, by the way, do we not adopt 'schwärmer'? 'enthusiast' does not in the least supply its place. If '*lifeguard*' was originally, as Richardson suggests, '*leibgarde*,' or '*body-guard*,' and from that transformed, by the determination of Englishmen to make it significant in English, into '*life-guard*,' or guard defending the *life* of the sovereign, this will be another word from the same quarter. Yet I have my doubts; '*leibgarde*' would scarcely have found its way hither before the accession of the House of Hanover, or at any rate before the arrival of William with his memorable Guards; while '*life-guard*,' in its present shape, is older in the language; we hear often of the '*life-guards*' during our Civil War; and Fuller writes, 'The Cherethites were a kind of *lifegard* to king David.'¹

There is only one province of words in which we are recent debtors to the Germans to any considerable extent. Of the terms used by the mineralogist and geologist many have been borrowed, and in compa-

¹ *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, 1650, p. 217.

ratively modern times, from them ; thus 'quartz,' 'felspar,' 'cobalt,' 'nickel,' 'zinc,' 'hornblend ;' while other of the terms employed by us are a direct translation from the same ; such for instance as 'fuller's earth' (walkererde), 'pipeclay' (pfeifenthon), 'pitchstone' (pechstein). Of very recent importations I hardly know one ; unless, indeed, we adopt Koch's ingenious suggestion that 'to loaf' and 'loafer,' which not very long ago arrived in England by way of America, are the German 'laufen' and 'läufer.'

But if we have not imported, we have been somewhat given of late to the copying of, German words, that is to the forming of words of our own on the scheme and model of some, which having taken our fancy, we have thought to enrich our own vocabulary with the like. I cannot consider that we have always been very happy in those thus selected for imitation. Possessing 'manual,' we need not have called 'handbook' back from an oblivion of nine hundred years ; and one can only regret that 'standpoint' has succeeded in forcing itself on the language. 'Einseitig' (itself modern, if I mistake not), is the pattern on which we have formed 'one-sided'—a word to which a few years ago something of affectation was attached ; none using it save those who dealt more or less in German wares ; it has however its manifest conveniences, and will hold its ground ; so too, as it seems, will 'fatherland,' though a certain note of affectation cleaves to it still ; and 'windbag,' which is evidently a translation of 'wind-beutel.' The happiest of these compounded words, of which the hint has been taken from the German, is 'folk-lore ;' the substitution of this for 'popular superstitions,' is an unquestionable gain.

It is only too easy to be mistaken in such a matter ; but, if I do not err, the following words have all been born during the present century, some within quite the later decades of this century. A distribution of them according to the languages from which they are drawn would show that Greek and Latin are the languages from which at the present day our own is mainly recruited ; ‘abnormal,’ ‘acrobat,’ ‘æon’ (Tennyson), ‘æsthetics’ (these last two must both renounce their initial diphthong, as ‘ether,’ ‘economy,’ and other words have done, before they can be regarded as quite at home with us);¹ ‘burke,’ ‘bus,’ ‘cab,’ ‘ceramic,’ ‘clipper,’ ‘demonetize,’ ‘demoralize,’ ‘demoralization,’ ‘deplete,’ ‘depletion,’ ‘desirability,’ ‘dissimilation,’ ‘educational,’ ‘enlightenment,’ ‘eurasian,’ ‘excursionist,’ ‘exploitation,’ ‘extradition,’ ‘fatherland,’ ‘fenian,’ ‘flange,’ ‘flunkey,’ ‘folk-lore,’ ‘garotte,’ ‘garotter,’ ‘grandiose,’ ‘hymnal,’ ‘hymnary,’ ‘hymnology,’ ‘immigrant,’ ‘international,’ ‘iodine,’ ‘linguistic,’ ‘loot,’ ‘macadamize,’ ‘myth,’ ‘neutralization,’ ‘normal,’ ‘oldster,’ ‘one-sided,’ ‘ornamentation,’ ‘outsider,’ ‘paraffin,’ ‘pérvvert,’ ‘photograph,’ ‘prayerful,’ ‘pretentious,’ ‘realistic,’ ‘recoup,’ ‘reformatory,’ ‘reliable,’ ‘révert,’ ‘revolver,’ ‘ritualist,’ ‘rowdy,’ ‘sanitary,’ ‘sensational,’ ‘sewage,’ ‘shrinkage,’ ‘shunt,’ ‘solidarity,’ ‘squatter,’ ‘standpoint,’ ‘statistics,’ ‘stereotype’ (the word was invented by Didot), ‘suggestive,’ ‘telegram,’ ‘tourist,’ ‘transliteration,’ ‘utilize,’ ‘utilization,’ ‘watershed.’ It must be confessed of several among these that we could want them (in the older sense of ‘to want’)

¹ A writer in the *Philological Museum*, so late as 1832, p. 369, was doubtful whether ‘æsthetics’ would establish itself in the language ; which it certainly has done.

without the want being very seriously felt ; others, not particularly praiseworthy, have yet been imposed upon us by necessities against which it would have been vain to struggle ; while there are those, as for example the last in this list, which are manifest acquisitions. I must pause here, for the subject is very far from exhausted yet.

LECTURE IV.

GAINS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

(CONTINUED.)

TAKING up the subject where in my last lecture I left off, I proceed to enumerate some other sources from which we have made additions to our vocabulary. Of course the period when absolutely new roots are generated will have passed away very long indeed before men begin by a reflective act to take notice of processes going forward in the language which they speak. That pure productive energy, creative we might call it, belongs to times quite out of the ken of history. It is only from materials already existing that it can enrich itself in the later, or historical stages of its development.

This it can do in many ways. And first, it can bring what it has already, two words or more, into new combinations, and form a new word out of these. Much more is wanted here than merely to link them together by a hyphen ; they must really coalesce and grow together. Different languages, and even the same language at different epochs of its life, will possess this power in very different degrees. The eminent felicity of the Greek has been always acknowledged. ‘The joints of her compounded words,’ says Fuller, ‘are so naturally oiled, that they run

nimbly on the tongue, which makes them, though long, never tedious, because significant.’¹ Sir Philip Sidney makes the same claim for our English, namely, that ‘it is particularly happy in the composition of two or three words together, near equal to the Greek.’ No one has done more than Milton to justify this praise, or to show what may be effected by this happy marriage of words. Many of his compound epithets, as ‘grey-hooded even,’ ‘coral-paven floor,’ ‘flowry-kirtled Naiades,’ ‘golden-wingéd host,’ ‘Night’s drowsy-flighted steeds,’ ‘tinsel-slippered feet,’ ‘violet-embroidered vale,’ ‘dewy-feathered sleep,’ ‘sky-tinctured grain,’ ‘vermeil-tinctured lip,’ ‘amber-dropping hair,’

¹ *Holy State*, b. ii. c. 6. Latin promised at one time to display an almost equal freedom in forming new words by the happy marriage of old. But at the period of its highest culture it seemed possessed with a timidity, which caused it voluntarily to abdicate this with many of its own powers. In the Augustan period we look in vain for epithets like these, both occurring in a single line of Catullus: ‘Ubi cerva *silvicultrix*, ubi aper *nemorivagus* ;’ or again, as his ‘fluentisonus,’ or as the ‘imbricator’ of Ennius. Nay, of those compound epithets which the language once had formed, it let numbers drop: ‘parcipromus,’ ‘turpilucricupidus,’ and many more, do not extend beyond Plautus. Quintilian (i. 5. 70): *Res tota magis Græcos decet, nobis minus succedit; nec id fieri naturâ puto, sed alienis favemus; ideoque cum κυρταυχένα mirati sumus, incurvicervicum vix a risu defendimus.* Elsewhere he complains of the little *generative* power of the Latin, its continual losses being compensated by no equivalent gains (viii. 6. 32): *Deinde, tanquam consummata sint omnia, nihil generare audemus ipsi, quum multa quotidie ab antiquis ficta moriantur.* Still the silver age of the language did recover to some extent the abdicated energies of its earlier times, reasserted among other powers that of combining words, with a certain measure of success.

‘night-foundered skiff,’ are themselves poems in miniature. Not unworthy to be set beside these are Sylvester’s ‘opal-coloured morn,’ Drayton’s ‘silver-sanded shore,’ Marlowe’s ‘golden-fingered Ind,’ Beaumont and Fletcher’s ‘golden-tressed Apollo,’ Shakespeare’s ‘heavy-gaited toad,’ Chapman’s (for Pope owed it to Chapman) ‘rosy-fingered morn,’ and Keats’ ‘yellow-girted bees.’ At the same time combinations like these remain to so great a degree the peculiar property of their first author, they so little pass into any further use, that they must rather be regarded as augmentations of its poetical wealth than its linguistic. Such words as ‘international,’ or as ‘folk-lore,’ instanced already, are better examples of real additions to our vocabulary. ‘International’ we owe to Jeremy Bentham, one of the boldest, yet in the main least successful among the coiners of new words. But strange and formless as is for the most part this progeny of his brain, he has given us here a word which does such excellent service, that it is difficult to understand how we contrived so long to do without it.

We have further increased our vocabulary by forming new words according to the analogy of formations which in parallel cases have been already allowed. Thus upon the substantives, ‘congregation,’ ‘convention,’ were formed ‘congregational,’ ‘conventional;’ yet these at a comparatively modern date; ‘congregational’ first rising up in the Assembly of Divines, or during the time of the Commonwealth.¹ These having found allowance, the process is repeated, not

¹ *Collection of Scarce Tracts*, edited by Sir W. Scott, vol. vii. p. 91.

always with very gratifying results, in the case of other words with the same ending. We are now used to 'educational,' and the word is serviceable enough ; but I can remember when a good many years ago an '*Educational Magazine*' was started, one's first impression was, that a work having to do with education should not thus bear upon its front an offensive, at best a very questionable, novelty in the English language. These adjectives are now multiplying fast. We have 'inflexional,' 'seasonal,' 'denominational,' and on this, in dissenting magazines at least, the monstrous birth, 'denominationalism;' 'emotional' is creeping into books; 'sensational,' name and thing, has found only too ready a welcome among us; so that it is hard to say whether all words with this termination will not finally generate an adjective. Convenient as you may sometimes find these, you will do well to abstain from all but the perfectly well recognized formations. For as many as have no claim to be arbiters of the language Pope's advice is good, as certainly it is safe, that they be not among the last to use a word which is going out, nor among the first to employ one that is coming in.

'Its,' the anomalously formed genitive of 'it,' was created with the object of removing an inconvenience, which for a while made itself seriously felt in the language. The circumstances of the rise of this little word, and of the place which it has secured itself among us, are sufficiently curious to justify a treatment which might seem out of proportion with the importance that it has ; but which none will deem so, who are at all acquainted with the remarkable facts of our language bound up in the story of the word.

Within the last few years attention has been drawn to the circumstance that 'its' is of comparatively recent introduction into the language. The earliest example which has yet been adduced is from Florio's *World of Words*, 1598 ; the next from the translation of Montaigne by the same author, 1603. You will not find it once in our English Bible, the office which it fulfils for us now being there fulfilled either by 'his' (Gen. i. 11 ; Exod. xxxvii. 17 ; Matt. v. 15) or 'her' (Jon. i. 15 ; Rev. xxii. 2), these applied as freely to inanimate things as to persons ; or else by 'thereof' (Gen. iii. 6 ; Ps. lxxv. 10) or 'of it' (Dan. vii. 5). Nor may Lev. xxv. 5 be urged as invalidating this assertion, as there will presently be occasion to show. To Bacon 'its' is altogether unknown ; he too had no scruple about using 'his' as a neuter ; as in the following passage : 'Learning hath *his* infancy, when *it* is but beginning and almost childish ; then *his* youth, when *it* is luxuriant and juvenile ; then *his* strength of years, when *it* is solid and reduced ; and lastly *his* old age, when *it* waxeth dry and exhaust.'¹ 'Its' is equally unknown to Spenser ; while in Shakespeare it occurs very rarely, in far the larger number of his plays not once ; indeed, all counted, I do not believe more than ten times in the whole ; though, singularly enough, three of these uses occur in one speech of twelve lines in *The Winter's Tale*.² Milton for the most part avoids it ; yet we find it a few times in his poetry.³

¹ *Essay* 58.

² Act. 1. Sc. 2.

³ As in *P. L.* i. 254 ; iv. 813. For all this it is employed by him so rarely, that the use of it four times in the little poem which has been recently ascribed to him, seems to me of itself

It is not hard to trace the motives which led to the generation of this genitive, or the causes which have enabled it against much tacit opposition to hold its own. A manifest inconvenience attended the employment of 'his' both for masculine and neuter, or, to speak more accurately, for persons and for things ; this, namely, that the personifying power of 'his,' no unimportant power for the poet, was seriously impaired, almost destroyed, thereby. It would be often difficult, nay impossible, to determine whether such a personification was intended or not ; and even where the context made perfectly evident that such *was* meant, the employment of the same form where nothing of the kind was intended, contributed greatly to diminish its effect. Craik has noticed as a consequence of this that Milton prefers, wherever it is possible, the feminine to the masculine personification,¹ as if he felt that the latter was always obscure from the risk of 'his' being taken for the neuter pronoun. There was room too for other confusions. When we read of the Ancient of Days, that '*his* throne was like the fiery flame, and *his* wheels as burning fire' (Dan. vii. 9), who does not now refer the second 'his' as well as the first to 'the Ancient of Days' ? It indeed belongs to the throne.

nearly decisive against his authorship. It is worth while, however, to see what has been urged on the other side in Mr. Morley's *King and Commons*. Unluckily, neither Mrs. Cowden Clarke, to whom we owe so excellent a *Concordance* of Shakespeare's *Plays* (but why not of his *Poems* as well ?) nor Mr. Prendergast, to whom we are indebted for one of Milton's *Poetical Works*, were aware of the importance of registering the very rare occurrences of 'its' in their several authors, and we look in vain for any notice of the word in them.

Thus, see *P. L.* ii. 4, 175, 584 ; ix. 1103 ; *Comus*, 396, 468.

So strongly had these and other inconveniences made themselves felt, that there was already, and had been for a long while, a genitival employment of 'it,' whereby it was made to serve all the uses which 'its' served at a later day. In some dialects, in the West Midland for example, this dates very far back.¹ We have one example of 'it,' so used, in the Authorized Version of Scripture, Lev. xxv. 5 : 'That which groweth of *it* own accord thou shalt not reap'—which has silently been changed in later editions to '*its* own accord ;' but 'it' was the reading in the exemplar edition of 1611, and for a considerable time following. Exactly the same phrase, 'of *it* own accord,' occurs in the Geneva Version at Acts xii. 10.² There are several examples, thirteen have been counted, of this use of 'it' in Shakespeare ; thus in *The Winter's Tale*, iii. 2 : 'The innocent milk in *it* most innocent mouth ;' and again in *King John*, ii. 3 : 'Go to *it* grandame.' And they are by no means unfrequent in other writers of the earlier half of the seventeenth century. Thus in Rogers' *Naaman the Syrian*, published in 1642, but the lectures delivered some eight years earlier, 'its' nowhere occurs, but a genitival 'it' often ; thus, 'I am at this mark, to withdraw the soul from the life of *it* own hand' (*Pre-*

¹ See Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. i. p. 280.

² And also in Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* i. 3, 5. In Keble's edition this is printed 'of *its* own accord.' Were this the original reading, then, as the book was first published in 1594, we should have an earlier example of 'its' by four years than that in Florio ; but in all editions up to that of 1632, 'of *it* own accord' is the reading.

face, p. 1) ; and again, 'The power of the Spirit is such that it blows at *it* own pleasure' (p. 441) ; and again, 'The scope which mercy propounds to herself of the turning of the soul to God, even the glory of *it* own self' (p. 442).¹

No doubt we have here in this use of 'it' a stepping-stone by which the introduction of 'its' was greatly aided. And yet for a long while the word was very reluctantly allowed, above all in any stater style. It was evidently regarded as a distasteful makeshift, not always to be dispensed with, but to which recourse should be had only when this was unavoidable. This feeling is not even now extinct. I remember hearing Lord Macaulay say that he always avoided 'its' when he could ; while to every writer of English verse, who has any sense of melody, the necessity of using it is often most unwelcome. It is, in fact, a *parvenu*, which forced itself into good society at last, but not with the good will of those who in the end had no choice but to admit it.

There is indeed a very singular period in our literature, extending over more than the first half of the seventeenth century, during which the old grammatical usages, namely, 'his' applied to neuters as freely as to masculines, or instead of this, 'thereof,' or 'of it,' were virtually condemned—the first as involving many possible confusions, the others as clumsy and antiquated contrivances for escaping these confusions, while yet at the same time the help of 'its' is claimed

¹ See upon this whole subject Craik, *On the English of Shakespeare*, 2nd edit. p. 97 ; Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, Engl. edit. p. 278 ; *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 280 ; and Wright, *The Bible Word-book*, s. v. 'it.'

as sparingly as possible, by some is not claimed at all. Thus I have carefully examined large portions of Daniel and Drayton—the first died in 1619, the second in 1631—without once lighting upon the word, and am inclined to believe that it occurs in neither; but, which is very much more noticeable, I have done this without lighting upon more than one or two passages where there was even the temptation, if the poet shrunk from the employment of 'its,' to employ any of the earlier substitutes; so that it is hardly too much to say that the whole fashion of their sentences must have been often shaped by a conscious or unconscious seeking to avoid the alternative necessities either of using, or else evidently finding a substitute for, this unwelcome little monosyllable. Dryden, I suppose, had no conscious scruple about employing 'its,' and yet how rarely he did so, as compared with a modern writer under the same inducements, a fact like this remarkably attests, namely, that in his rendering of the second book of the *Æneid*, on which I made the experiment, 'its' occurs only three times, while in Conington's translation of the same no fewer times than twenty-six. We may further note that many who employed the newly invented possessive, ever and anon fell back on 'his,' or 'her,' or 'thereof,' as though the other did not exist. It is thus continually with Fuller, and, though not so often, with Jeremy Taylor. Thus the former says of Solomon's Temple: 'Twice was *it* pillaged by foreign foes, and four times by *her* own friends before the final destruction *thereof*.'¹ He turns to 'thereof' for help ten times for

¹ *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, p. 40. Compare Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*. New York, 1860, p. 399.

once that 'its' finds allowance with him. And in Jeremy Taylor a construction such as the following is not unusual: 'Death hath not only lost the sting, but *it* bringeth a coronet in *her* hand.'

How soon, with all this, the actual novelty of 'its' was forgotten is strikingly evidenced by the fact that when Dryden, in one of his moods of fault-finding with the poets of the preceding generation, is taking Ben Jonson to task for general inaccuracy in his English diction, among other counts of his indictment, he quotes this line from *Catiline*,

'Though heaven should speak with all *his* wrath at once,' and proceeds, '*heaven* is ill syntax with *his*;' and this, while in fact till within forty or fifty years of the time when Dryden began to write, no other-syntax was known; and to a much later date was exceedingly rare. Curious, too, is it to note that in the earnest controversy which followed on the publication by Chatterton of the poems ascribed by him to the monk Rowley, who should have lived in the fifteenth century, no one appealed to the following line,

'Life and all *its* goods I scorn,'

as at once deciding that the poems were not of the age which they pretended. Warton, who denied, though with some hesitation, the antiquity of the poems,¹ giving many and sufficient reasons for this denial, failed to take note of this little word, which betrayed the forgery at once.

Again, languages enrich their vocabulary, our own has largely done so, by recovering treasures which

¹ *History of English Poetry*, vol. ii. p. 463, sqq.

had escaped them for a while. Not that all which drops out of use and memory is loss; there are words which it is gain to be rid of, and which none would wish to revive; words of which Dryden says truly, though in a somewhat ungracious comparison—they do ‘not deserve this redemption, any more than the crowds of men who daily die, or are slain for sixpence in a battle, merit to be restored to life, if a wish could revive them.’¹ But there are others which it is a real advantage to draw back again from the temporary oblivion into which they had fallen, and such recoveries are more numerous than might at first be supposed.

You may remember that Horace, tracing in a few memorable lines the fortune of words, and noting that many, once current, were in his time no longer in use, did not therefore count that of necessity their race was for ever run. So far from this, he confidently anticipated a *palingenesis* or renewed existence for many among them.² They had set, but they should rise again: what seemed death was only suspended animation. Such indeed is constantly the fact. Words slip almost or quite as imperceptibly back into use as they once slipped out of it. There is abundant evidence of this. Thus in the contemporary gloss which an anonymous friend of Spenser furnishes to his *Shepherd's Calendar*, first published in 1579, ‘for the exposition of old words,’ as he declares, he includes the following in his list: ‘askance,’

¹ Postscript to his *Translation of the Æneid*. For Gray's judgment on the words recovered or recalled by Dryden see *Letter 43*, to West.

² Multa renascentur, quæ jam cecidere.

Ars Poët. 46–72; cf. *Ep.* ii. 2. 115.

‘bevy,’ ‘coronal,’ ‘dapper,’ ‘embellish,’ ‘fain,’ ‘flowret,’ ‘forlorn,’ ‘forestall,’ ‘glee,’ ‘keen,’ ‘scathe,’ ‘seer,’ ‘surly,’ ‘welter,’ ‘wizard,’ with others quite as familiar as these. In Speght’s *Chaucer* (1667), there is a long list of ‘old and obscure words in Chaucer explained ;’ these ‘old and obscure words’ including ‘anthem,’ ‘blithe,’ ‘bland,’ ‘chaplet,’ ‘carol,’ ‘deluge,’ ‘franchise,’ ‘illusion,’ ‘problem,’ ‘recreant,’ ‘sphere,’ ‘tissue,’ ‘transcend,’ with very many easier than these. In Skinner’s *Etymologicon* (1671), there is another such list of words which have gone out of use,¹ and among these he includes ‘to dovetail,’ ‘to interlace,’ ‘elvish,’ ‘encumbred,’ ‘gawd,’ ‘glare,’ ‘malison,’ ‘masquerade’ (mascarade), ‘oriental,’ ‘phantom,’ ‘plumage,’ ‘pummel’ (pomell), ‘shapely.’ Again, there is prefixed to Thomson’s *Castle of Indolence*, in which, as is well known, he affects the archaic, an ‘explanation of the obsolete words used in this poem.’ They are not very many, but they include ‘appal,’ ‘aye,’ ‘bale,’ ‘blazon,’ ‘carol,’ ‘deftly,’ ‘gear,’ ‘glee,’ ‘imp,’ ‘nursling,’ ‘prankt,’ ‘sere,’ ‘sheen,’ ‘sweltry,’ ‘thrall,’ ‘unkempt,’ ‘wight ;’ many of which would be used without scruple in the prose, the remainder belonging to the recognized poetical diction, of the present day. West, a contemporary of Thomson, whose works have found their way into *Johnson’s Poets*, and who, like Thomson, flattered himself that he was writing ‘in the manner of Spenser,’ counts it necessary to explain ‘assay,’ ‘astound,’ ‘caitiff,’ ‘dight,’ ‘emprise,’ ‘guise,’ ‘kaiser,’ ‘palmer,’ ‘paragon,’ ‘paramour,’

¹ *Etymologicon vocum omnium antiquarum quæ usque a Wilhelmo Victore invaluerunt, et jam ante parentum ætatem in usu esse desierunt.*

‘paynim,’ ‘prowess,’ ‘trenchant,’ ‘welkin;’ with all which our poetry is familiar now.

It is well-nigh incredible what words it has been sometimes proposed to dismiss from our English Bible on the plea that they ‘are now almost or entirely obsolete.’ Wemyss, writing in 1816, desired to get rid of ‘athirst,’ ‘ensample,’ ‘garner,’ ‘haply,’ ‘jeopardy,’ ‘lack,’ ‘passion,’ ‘straightway,’ ‘twain,’ ‘wax,’ with a multitude of other words not a whit more aloof from our ordinary use. Purver, whose *New and Literal Translation of the Old and New Testament* appeared in 1764, has an enormous list of expressions that are ‘clownish, barbarous, base, hard, technical, misapplied, or new coined;’ and among these are ‘beguile,’ ‘boisterous,’ ‘lineage,’ ‘perseverance,’ ‘potentate,’ ‘remit,’ ‘seducer,’ ‘shorn,’ ‘swerved,’ ‘vigilant,’ ‘unction,’ ‘unloose,’ ‘vocation.’ And the same worship of the fleeting present, of the transient fashions of the hour in language, with the same contempt of that stable past which in all likelihood will be the enduring future, long after these ephemeral fashions have passed away and are forgotten, manifests itself to an extravagant degree in the new Version of the American Bible Union. It needs only for a word to have the slightest suspicion of age upon it, to have ceased but for the moment to be the current money of the street and the market-place, and there is nothing for it but peremptory exclusion. ‘To chasten’ and ‘chastening,’ ‘to better,’ ‘to faint,’ ‘to quicken,’ ‘conversation,’ ‘saints,’ ‘wherefore,’ ‘straitly,’ ‘wroth,’ with hundreds more, are thrust out, avowedly upon this plea; and modern substitutes introduced in their room. I can fancy no more effectual scheme for debasing the Ver-

sion, nor, if it were admitted as the law of revision, for the lasting impoverishment of the English tongue. One can only liken it to a custom of some barbarous tribes, who, as soon as their relatives begin to show tokens of old age, bury them alive, or by some other means put them out of the way. They, however, might plead this, that their old would grow older still, more useless, more burdensome, every day. It is nothing of the kind with the words which, on somewhat similar grounds, are forcibly dismissed. A multitude of these, often the most precious ones, after a period of semi-obsolete-ness, of withdrawal from active service for a while, obtain that second youth, pass into free and unquestioned currency again. But nothing would so effectually hinder this rejuvenescence as the putting a ban upon them directly they have passed out of vulgar use ; as this resolution, that if they have withdrawn for ever so brief a time from the every-day service of men, they shall never be permitted to return to it again. A true lover of his native tongue will adopt another course :

Obscurata diu populo bonus eruet,

and valuable words which are in danger of disappearing, instead of bidding to be gone, he will do his best to detain or recover.

Who would now affirm of the verb ‘to hallow’ that it is even obsolescent? yet Wallis two hundred years ago observed—‘it has almost gone out of use’ (*fere desuevit*). It would be difficult to find an example of the verb ‘to advocate’ between Milton and Burke. Franklin, an admirable master of the homelier English style, considered the word to have sprung up during

his own residence in Europe. In this, indeed, he was mistaken ; it had only during this period revived. Johnson says of 'jeopardy' that it is a 'word not now in use ;' which certainly is not any longer true.¹

I am persuaded that in facility of being understood, Chaucer is not merely as near, but much nearer, to us than he was felt by Dryden and his contemporaries to be to them. They make exactly the same sort of complaints, only in still stronger language, about his archaic phraseology and the obscurities which it involves, which we still sometimes hear at the present day. Thus in the *Preface* to his *Tales from Chaucer*, having quoted some not very difficult lines from the earlier poet whom he was modernizing, he proceeds : 'You have here a specimen of Chaucer's language, which is so obsolete that his sense is scarce to be understood.'² Nor did it fare thus with Chaucer only.

¹ In like manner La Bruyère (*Caractères*, c. 14) laments the extinction of a large number of French words which he names. At least half of these have now free course in the language, as 'valeureux,' 'haineux,' 'peineux,' 'fructueux,' 'mensonger,' 'coutumier,' 'vantard,' 'courtois,' 'jovial,' 'fétoyer,' 'larmoyer,' 'verdoyer.' Two or three of these may be rarely used, but every one would be found in a dictionary of the living language.

² But for all this Dryden thought him worth understanding. Not so Addison. In a rapid review of English poets he accounts 'the merry bard'—this is his characteristic epithet for the most pathetic poet in the language—as one the whole significance of whose antiquated verse has for ever passed away :

'But age has rusted what the poet writ,
Worn out his language, and obscured his wit.
In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,
And tries to make his readers laugh in vain.'

These wits and poets of the Court of Charles the Second were conscious of a wider gulf between themselves and the Elizabethan æra, separated from them by little more than fifty years, than any of which *we* are aware, separated from it by two centuries more. It was not merely that they felt themselves more removed from its tone and spirit; it is easy to understand how this should be ;¹ but I am convinced that they found more difficulty and strangeness in the language of Spenser and Shakespeare than we find at this present; that it sounded more uncouth, more old-fashioned, more crowded with obsolete terms than it does in our ears at the present. Only so can one explain the tone in which they are accustomed to speak of these worthies of the near past. I must again cite Dryden, the truest representative for good and for evil of literary England during the later decades of the seventeenth century. Of Spenser, whose death was separated from his own birth by little more than thirty years, he speaks as of one belonging to quite a different epoch, counting it much to say, ‘notwithstanding his obsolete language, he is still intelligible; at least after a little practice.’² Nay, hear his judgment of Shakespeare himself, so far as language is concerned: ‘It must be allowed to the present age

¹ Addison takes credit for this inability of his own age to find any satisfaction in that which Spenser sung for the delight of his :

‘But now the mystic tale, that pleased of yore,
Can charm our understanding age no more;
The long-spun allegories fulsome grow,
While the dull moral lies too plain below.’

² *Preface to Juvena.*

that the tongue in general is so much refined since Shakespeare's time, that many of his words and more of his phrases are scarce intelligible. And of those which we understand, some are ungrammatical, others coarse ; and his whole style is so pestered with figurative expressions, that it is as affected as it is obscure.¹

Sometimes a word emerges from the lower strata of society, not indeed new, but yet to most seeming new, its very existence having been forgotten by the larger number of those speaking the language ; although it must have somewhere lived on upon the lips of men. Thus, since the gold-fields of California and Australia have been opened, we hear often of a 'nugget' of gold ; being a lump of the pure metal ; and it has been debated whether the word is a new birth altogether, or a popular recasting of 'ingot.' It is most probably this last ; and yet scarcely a recent one, framed for the present need, seeing that 'nugget,' or 'niggot' as it is spelt by them, occurs in our elder writers.² There

¹ *Preface to Troilus and Cressida.* In justice to Dryden, and lest he should seem to speak poetic blasphemy, it should not be forgotten that 'pestered' had in his time no such offensive a sense as it has now. It meant no more than inconveniently crowded (see my *Select Glossary*, s. v.). Still it is wonderful to hear him saying, as he does elsewhere, that 'Shakespeare had rather written happily, than knowingly or justly' when indeed his art is quite as marvellous as his nature, that is if it be possible to distinguish the one from the other.

² Thus in North's *Plutarch's Lives*, p. 499 : 'After the fire was quenched, they found in *niggots* of gold and silver mingled together, about a thousand talents ;' and again, p. 323 : 'There was brought a marvellous great mass of treasure in *niggots* of gold.' The word has not found its way into our dictionaries or glossaries.

can be little doubt of the identity of 'niggot' and 'nugget;' all the consonants, the *stamina* of a word, being the same; whilst that earlier form makes plausible the suggestion that 'nugget' is only 'ingot' a little disguised, since it wants nothing but the very common transposition of the first two letters to bring them to an almost absolute identity.

There is another very fruitful source of increase in the vocabulary of a language. What was once one word separates into two, takes two forms, or even more, and each of these asserts an existence independent of the other. The impulse and suggestion to this is in general first given by differences in pronunciation, which are presently represented by differences in spelling; or it will sometimes happen that what at first were no more than precarious and arbitrary variations in spelling come in the end to be regarded as words altogether distinct: they detach themselves from one another, not again to reunite; just as accidental varieties in fruits or flowers, produced at hazard, have permanently separated off, and settled into different kinds. They have each its own distinct domain of meaning, as by general agreement assigned to it; dividing the inheritance between them, which before they held in common. No one who has not watched and catalogued these words as they have fallen under his notice, would believe how numerous they are.

Sometimes as the accent is placed on one syllable of a word or another, it comes to have different significations, and those so distinctly marked, that the separation may be regarded as complete. Examples

of this are the following: 'divers,' and 'divérse ;' 'cónjure' and 'conjúre ;' 'ántic' and 'antíque ;' 'húman' and 'humáne ;' 'úrban' and 'urbáne ;' 'géntle,' 'géntile,' and 'gentéel ;' 'cústom' and 'cos-túme ;' 'éssay' and 'assáy ;' 'próperty' and 'pro-priety.' Or again, a word is pronounced at full, or somewhat more shortly: thus 'spirit' and 'sprite ;' 'blossom' and 'bloom ;' 'courtesy' and 'curtsey ;' 'chaloupe' and 'sloop ;' 'nourish' and 'nurse ;' 'personality' and 'personalty ;' 'fantasy' and 'fancy ;' 'triumph' and 'trump' (the *winning* card¹) ; 'happily' and 'haply ;' 'ordinance' and 'ordnance ;' 'shallop' and 'sloop ;' 'brabble' and 'brawl ;' 'syrup' and 'shrub ;' 'balsam' and 'balm ;' 'dame' and 'dam ;' 'cape' and 'cap ;' 'eremite' and 'hermit ;' 'nighest' and 'next ;' 'poesy' and 'posy ;' 'achievement' and 'hatchment ;' 'manœuvre' and 'manure ;' and, older probably than any of these, 'other' and 'or ;'—or with the dropping of the first letter or letters: 'history' and 'story ;' 'harbour' and 'arbour ;' 'etiquette' and 'ticket ;' 'escheat' and 'cheat ;' 'estate' and 'state ;'—or with a dropping of the last syllable, as 'Britany' and 'Britain ;' 'crony' and 'crone ;'—or, without losing a syllable, with more or less stress laid on the close: 'regiment' and 'regimen ;' 'corpse' and 'corps ;' 'bite' and 'bit ;' 'sire' and 'sir ;' 'land' or 'laund' and 'lawn ;' 'suite' and 'suit ;' 'swinge' and 'swing ;' 'gulph' and 'gulp ;' 'launch' and 'lance ;' 'wealth' and 'weal ;' 'stripe' and 'strip ;' 'borne' and 'born ;' 'glaze' and 'glass ;'

¹ See Latimer's famous *Sermon on Cards*, where 'triumph' and 'trump' are interchangeably used.

‘stave’ and ‘staff;’ ‘clothes’ and ‘cloths.’ Or sometimes a slight internal vowel-change finds place, as between ‘dent’ and ‘dint;’ ‘rant’ and ‘rent’ (a ranting actor tears or *rends* a passion to tatters); ‘creak’ and ‘croak;’ ‘float’ and ‘fleet;’ ‘lill’ (Spenser) and ‘loll;’ ‘reel’ and ‘roll;’ ‘cross’ and ‘cruise;’ ‘sleek’ and ‘slick;’ ‘sheen’ and ‘shine;’ ‘shriek’ and ‘shrike;’ ‘pick’ and ‘peck;’ ‘peak’ ‘pique’ and ‘pike;’ ‘snip’ ‘sneap’ and ‘snub;’ ‘plot’ and ‘plat;’ ‘weald’ and ‘wold;’ ‘drip’ and ‘drop;’ ‘wreathe’ and ‘writhe;’ ‘spear’ and ‘spire’ (‘the last *spire* of grass,’ South); ‘trist’ and ‘trust;’ ‘band’ ‘bend’ and ‘bond;’ ‘cope’ ‘cape’ and ‘cap;’ ‘tip’ and ‘top;’ ‘slent’ (now obsolete) and ‘slant;’ ‘sweep’ and ‘swoop;’ ‘wrest’ and ‘wrist;’ ‘neb’ and ‘nib;’ ‘gad’ (now surviving only in gadfly) and ‘goad;’ ‘complement’ and ‘compliment;’ ‘spike’ and ‘spoke;’ ‘tamper’ and ‘temper;’ ‘sputter’ and ‘spatter;’ ‘flutter’ and ‘flatter;’ ‘rugged’ and ‘ragged;’ ‘gargle’ and ‘gurgle;’ ‘snake’ and ‘sneak’ (both crawl); ‘deal’ and ‘dole;’ ‘giggle’ and ‘gaggle’ (this last is now commonly spelt ‘cackle’); ‘scribble’ and ‘scrabble;’ ‘flicker’ and ‘flacker’ (now obsolete); ‘gourmand’ and ‘gormand;’ ‘sip’ ‘sop’ ‘soup’ and ‘sup;’ ‘clack’ ‘click’ and ‘clock;’ ‘tetchy’ and ‘touchy;’ ‘sauce’ and ‘souse;’ ‘spoil’ and ‘spill;’ ‘halt’ and ‘hold;’ ‘vendor’ and ‘vender;’ ‘visitor’ and ‘visiter;’ ‘neat’ and ‘nett;’ ‘stud’ and ‘steed;’ ‘then’ and ‘than;’¹ ‘grits’ and ‘grouts;’ ‘spirt’ and ‘sprout;’ ‘prune’ and ‘preen;’

¹ On these words see a learned discussion in *English Retraced*, Cambridge, 1862.

‘mister’ and ‘master ;’ ‘allay’ and ‘alloy ;’ ‘ghostly’ and ‘ghastly ;’ ‘person’ and ‘parson ;’ ‘cleft’ and ‘clift’ (now written ‘cliff’) ; ‘travel’ and ‘travail ;’ ‘truth’ and ‘troth ;’ ‘pennon’ and ‘pinion ;’ ‘quail’ ‘quell’ and ‘kill ;’ ‘metal’ and ‘mettle ;’ ‘ballad’ and ‘ballet ;’ ‘chagrin’ and ‘shagreen ;’ ‘can’ and ‘ken ;’ ‘Francis’ and ‘Frances ;’¹ ‘chivalry’ and ‘cavalry ;’ ‘oaf’ and ‘elf ;’ ‘thresh’ and ‘thrash ;’ ‘lose’ and ‘loose ;’ ‘taint’ and ‘tint ;’ ‘mood’ and ‘mode.’ Sometimes the difference is mainly or entirely in the initial consonants, as between ‘phial’ and ‘vial ;’ ‘pother’ and ‘bother ;’ ‘bursar’ and ‘purser ;’ ‘thrice’ and ‘trice ;’ ‘fitch’ and ‘vetch ;’ ‘strinkle’ (now obsolete) and ‘sprinkle ;’ ‘shatter’ and ‘scatter ;’ ‘chattel’ and ‘cattle ;’ ‘chant’ and ‘cant ;’ ‘shrub’ and ‘scrub ;’ ‘champaign’ and ‘campaign ;’ ‘zealous’ and ‘jealous ;’ ‘channel’ and ‘kennel ;’ ‘quay’ and ‘key ;’ ‘thrill’ ‘trill’ and ‘drill ;’—or in the consonants in the middle of the word, as between ‘cancer’ and ‘canker ;’ ‘nipple’ and ‘nibble ;’ ‘tittle’ and ‘title ;’ ‘price’ and ‘prize ;’ ‘consort’ and ‘concert ;’ sometimes the change embraces the initial consonant as well, as in ‘pipe’ and ‘fife.’

Or a word is spelt now with a final *k* and now with a final *ch* ; out of this variation two different words have been formed, with, it may be, other slight

¹ The appropriating of ‘Frances’ to women and ‘Francis’ to men is quite modern ; it was formerly as often Sir Frances Drake as Sir Francis, while Fuller (*Holy State*, b. iv. c. 14) speaks of Francis Brandon, eldest daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk ; and see Ben Jonson, *New Inn*, Act ii. Sc. I

differences superadded; thus is it with 'poke' and 'poach;' 'dyke' and 'ditch;' 'stink' and 'stench;' 'prick' and 'pritch' (now obsolete); 'milk' and 'milch;' 'break' 'breach' and 'broach;' 'lace' and 'latch;' 'stick' and 'stitch;' 'lurk' and 'lurch;' 'bank' and 'bench;' 'stark' and 'starch;' 'wake' and 'watch.' So too *t* and *d* are easily exchanged; as in 'clod' and 'clot;' 'vend' and 'vent;' 'brood' and 'brat;' 'sad' and 'set;' 'card' and 'chart;' 'medley' and 'motley.' Or there has grown up, beside the accurate pronunciation, a popular as well; and this in the end has formed itself into another word; thus it is with 'housewife' and 'hussey;' 'grandfather' and 'gaffer;' 'grandmother' and 'gammer;' 'hanaper' and 'hamper;' 'puisne' and 'puny;' 'patron' and 'pattern;' 'spital' (hospital) and 'spittle' (house of correction); 'accompt' and 'account;' 'polity' and 'policy;' 'donjon' and 'dungeon;' 'nestle' and 'nuzzle' (now obsolete); 'Egyptian' and 'gypsy;' 'Bethlehem' and 'Bedlam;' 'Pharaoh' and 'faro' (this game being so called because the winning card bore the likeness of the Egyptian king); 'exemplar' and 'sampler;' 'procuracy' and 'proxy;' 'dolphin' and 'dauphin;' 'iota' and 'jot;' 'synodsman' and 'sidesman.'

Other changes cannot perhaps be reduced exactly under any of these heads; as between 'ounce' and 'inch;' 'errant' and 'arrant;' 'slack' and 'slake;' 'twang' and 'tang;' 'valet' and 'varlet;' 'simper' and 'simmer;' 'slow' and 'slough;' 'bow' and 'bough;' 'hurl' and 'whirl;' 'hew' and 'hough;' 'dies' and 'dice' (both plurals of 'die'); 'plunge' and 'flounce;' 'egg' and 'edge;' 'staff' and 'stave;' 'scull'

‘school’ and ‘shoal;’ ‘frith’ and ‘firth;’ ‘wretchedness’ and ‘recklessness;’ ‘benefit’ and ‘benefice.’¹ Or, it may be, the difference is in the spelling only, appreciable by the eye, but escaping altogether the ear. It is thus with ‘draft’ and ‘draught;’ ‘plain’ and ‘plane;’ ‘coign’ and ‘coin;’ ‘flower’ and ‘flour;’ ‘check’ and ‘cheque;’ ‘straight’ and ‘strait;’ ‘ton’ and ‘tun;’ ‘road’ and ‘rode;’ ‘throw’ and ‘throe;’ ‘wrack’ and ‘rack;’ ‘gait’ and ‘gate;’ ‘hoard’ and ‘horde;’ ‘knoll’ and ‘noll;’ ‘chord’ and ‘cord;’ ‘drachm’ and ‘dram;’ ‘license’ and ‘licence;’ ‘sergeant’ and ‘serjeant;’ ‘mask’ and ‘masque;’ ‘villain’ and ‘villein.’

Now, if you will put the matter to proof, you will find, I believe, in every case that there has attached itself to the different forms of a word a modification of meaning more or less sensible, that each has won

¹ A singularly characteristic trait of Papal policy once turned upon the fact that ‘beneficium’ contained in itself both ‘benefice’ and ‘benefit.’ Pope Adrian the Fourth writing to Frederic the First to complain of certain conduct of his, reminded the Emperor that he had placed the imperial crown upon his head, and would willingly have conferred even greater ‘beneficia’ upon him than this. Had this been allowed to pass, it would no doubt have been afterwards appealed to as an admission on the Emperor’s part, that he held the Empire as a feud or fief (for ‘beneficium’ was then the technical word for this, though the meaning has much narrowed since) from the Pope—the very point in dispute between them. The word was indignantly repelled by the Emperor and the whole German nation, whereupon the Pope appealed to the etymology, that ‘beneficium’ was but ‘bonum factum,’ and protested that he meant no more than to remind the Emperor of the various ‘benefits’ which he had done him (Neander, *Kirch. Geschichte*, vol. v. p. 318).

an independent sphere of meaning, which remains peculiarly its own. Thus 'divers' implies difference only, but 'diverse' difference with opposition; thus the several Evangelists narrate the same event in 'divers' manners, but not in 'diverse.' 'Antique' is ancient, but 'antic' is this same ancient regarded as overlived, out of date, and so in our days grotesque, ridiculous; and then, with a dropping of the reference to age, the grotesque, the ridiculous alone. 'Human' is what every man is, 'humane' is what every man ought to be; for Johnson's suggestion that 'humane' is from the French feminine 'humaine,' and 'human' from the masculine, is contrary to all the analogies of language. 'Ingenious' expresses a mental, 'ingenuous' a moral excellence. A gardener 'prunes' or trims his trees, properly indeed his *vines* (*provigner*), birds 'preen' or trim their feathers. We 'allay' wine with water; we 'alloy' gold with platina. 'Bloom' is a finer and yet more delicate efflorescence even than 'blossom;' thus the 'bloom,' but not the 'blossom,' of the cheek. It is now always 'clots' of blood and 'clods' of earth; a 'float' of timber, and a 'fleet' of ships; men 'vend' wares, and 'vent' complaints. 'A curtsey' is one, and that merely an external, manifestation of 'courtesy.' 'Gambling' may be, as with a fearful irony it is called, *play*, but it is nearly as distant from 'gambolling' as hell is from heaven. Nor would it be hard, in almost every pair or larger group of words which I have adduced, to detect shades of meaning which one word has obtained and not the other.¹

¹ The same happens in other languages. Thus in Greek *ἀνάθεμα* and *ἀνάθημα* both signify that which is devoted, though in very different senses, to the higher powers; *θάρος*,

There is another very sensible gain which the language has made, although of a different kind altogether. For a long time past there has been a tendency to bring the component parts of a word into linguistic harmony, so that it shall not any longer be made up of a Saxon prefix or suffix, joined to a Latin root, but shall be all homogeneous; and if Latin in the body of the word, then such throughout. This evidently was not the case with ‘unsatiable,’ ‘unglorious,’ ‘undiscreet,’ ‘uncredible,’ ‘invisible,’ ‘intolerable,’ ‘unreligious’ (all in Wiclif); which have

boldness, and *θράσος*, temerity, were at first but different spellings of the same word; so too *γρίπος* and *γρίφος*, *ἔθος* and *ἦθος*, *βρύκω* and *βρύχω*: and probably *ὀβελδος* and *ὀβολδος*, *σορὸς* and *σωρός*. In Latin ‘penna’ and ‘pinna’ differ only in form, and signify alike a ‘wing;’ while yet ‘penna’ has come to be used for the wing of a bird, ‘pinna’ (the diminutive, ‘pinnaculum,’ giving us ‘pinnacle’) for that of a building; so is it with ‘Thrax’ a Thracian, and ‘Threx’ a gladiator; with ‘codex’ and ‘caudex;’ ‘forfex’ and ‘forceps;’ ‘anticus’ and ‘antiquus;’ ‘celeber’ and ‘creber;’ ‘infacetus’ and ‘inficetus;’ ‘mulgeo’ and ‘mulceo;’ ‘providentia,’ ‘prudentia,’ and ‘provincia;’ ‘columen’ and ‘culmen;’ ‘coitus’ and ‘cœtus;’ ‘ægrimonia’ and ‘ærumna;’ ‘Lucina’ and ‘luna;’ ‘cohors’ and ‘cors;’ ‘navita’ and ‘nauta;’ in German with ‘rechtlich’ and ‘redlich;’ ‘schlecht’ and ‘schlicht;’ ‘golden’ and ‘gulden;’ ‘höfisch’ and ‘hübsch;’ ‘ahnden’ and ‘ahnen’ (see a very interesting notice in Grimm’s *Wörterbuch*); ‘biegsam’ and ‘beugsam;’ ‘fürsehung’ and ‘vorsehung;’ ‘deich’ and ‘teich;’ ‘trotz’ and ‘trutz;’ ‘born’ and ‘brunnen;’ ‘athem’ and ‘odem:’ in French with ‘harnois,’ the armour or ‘harness’ of a soldier, and ‘harnais’ of a horse; with ‘foible’ and ‘faible;’ with ‘Zéphire’ and ‘zéphir;’ with ‘chaire’ and ‘chaise,’ the latter having been at the first nothing else but a vicious and affected pronunciation of the former, and with many more.

now severally given place to 'insatiable,' 'inglorious,' 'indiscreet,' and the rest; while 'untimely,' 'unwitting,' and many more, in which there existed no such discord between the parts, remain as they were. In the same way 'unpure' (Barnes) has been replaced by 'impure,' 'unfirm' (Shakespeare) by 'infirm,' 'unmoveable' (Authorized Version) by 'immoveable,' 'un-noble' (Drayton) by 'ignoble,' 'unmeasurable' (North) by 'immeasurable,' 'unreverent' (the same) by 'irreverent,' 'unvincible' (the same) by 'invincible,' 'un-capable' (Hooker) by 'incapable,' 'unpatient' (Coverdale) by 'impatient,' 'unpartial' (Jackson) by 'impartial,' 'undecent' (Cowley) by 'indecent,' 'un-active' (Milton) by 'inactive.' 'Unpossible,' which is the proper reading of our Authorized Version at Matt. xvii. 20; xix. 26, and, I believe, throughout, has been silently changed into 'impossible.' Here and there, but very rarely, the tendency has been in the opposite direction—to create these anomalies, not to remove them. Thus Milton's 'inchastity' (prose), 'ingrateful,' have given place to the less correct 'unchastity,' 'ungrateful.'

And as with the prefix, so also it has fared with the suffix. A large group of our Latin words for a long while had not a Latin, but a Saxon termination. We have several of these in the Bible and in the Prayer Book; 'pureness,' for example, 'frailness,' 'disquietness,' 'perfectness,' and 'simpleness.' 'Pureness' may perhaps still survive; but for the others we have substituted 'frailty' (recalled it, we may say, for it was already in *Piers Ploughman*), 'disquietude,' 'perfection,' 'simplicity.' The same has happened with a multitude of others; 'jolliness' (Chaucer) has given

way to 'jollity;' 'poverness' (*Piers Ploughman*) to 'poverty,' 'gayness' (Shakespeare) to 'gaiety,' 'subtleness' (Sidney) to 'subtlety,' 'ableness' (Spenser) to 'ability;' 'ferventness' (Coverdale) to 'fervency;' 'cruelness' (Golding) to 'cruelty;' 'desolateness' (Andrews) to 'desolation;' 'partialness' (Frith) to 'partiality;' 'spiritualness,' 'vainness,' 'realness,' 'vulgarness,' 'immoralness' (all in Rogers), severally to 'spirituality,' 'vanity,' 'reality,' 'vulgarity,' 'immorality;' 'stableness' (Coverdale) to 'stability;' 'grave-ness' (Shakespeare) to 'gravity;' 'chasteness' (Chapman) to 'chastity,' 'unequalness' (J. Taylor) to 'inequality,' 'solemnness' (Shakespeare) to 'solemnity,' 'dejectedness' (Bishop Hall) to 'dejection,' 'insensibleness' (Manton) to 'insensibility;' 'doubleness' (Hawes) to 'duplicity,' 'splendidness' (H. More) to 'splendour.' So too 'furiousness,' 'terribleness,' 'valiantness,' 'insatiableness,' 'rigorousness,' have all been felt to be words ill put together, and have silently been dropped; nor would it be difficult to add immensely to this list. Thus too, though we have not at this day altogether rejected words in which the French termination 'able' is combined with a Saxon root, as 'unspeakable' and the like, still there has been an evident disposition among us to diminish their number. There were once far more of these, as 'findable,' 'unlackable,' 'ungainsayable' (all in Pecoek), 'matchable' (Spenser), 'mockable' (Shakespeare), 'woundable' (Fuller), 'speakable' (Milton), than there are now. 'The rejection of these hybrid words,' as has been well said,¹ 'from the modern vocabulary is

¹ Marsh, *Origin and History of the English Language*, p. 475.

curious, as an instance of the unconscious exercise of a linguistic instinct by the English people. The objection to such adjectives is their mongrel character, the root being Saxon, the termination Romanic; and it is an innate feeling of the incongruity of such alliances, not the speculative theories of philologists, which has driven so many of them out of circulation.'

But changes not unlike to those which I have just noted have come over words, where there was no such inducement arising from a sense of incongruity in their component parts; where, on the contrary, they were already homogeneous in the sources from which they were derived. In these instances the language seems, so to say, to have hesitated for a while before it made up its mind which suffix it would employ, and has often in later times rejected one which in earlier it appeared disposed to adopt, and in the stead of this adopted another. The suffix 'ness,' which, as we just now saw, has lost its hold on a great many Latin words, with which it certainly had no right to be joined, has more than made good these losses by gains in other directions. Many words that ended for a while in 'ship,' now end in 'ness,' as 'gladship' (*Ormulum*), 'mildship,' 'meekship,' 'idleship' (all in *Hali Meidenhad*), 'goodship' (see Stratman), 'gentleship' (Ascham), 'guiltiship' (Geneva Bible); which are now severally 'gladness,' 'mildness,' 'meekness,' 'idleness,' 'goodness,' 'gentleness,' and 'guiltiness.' More numerous are those which, terminating once in 'head' or 'hood,' have finally settled down with that same termination. I adduce a few, 'busihede,' 'wearihede,' 'holihede,' 'newhede,' 'godlihede,' 'swifthede,' 'greenhede,'

'vilehede,' 'blisedhede' (all in *The Ayenbite*); 'wickedhed,' 'pensivehed,' 'lowlihed' (all in Chaucer); 'manlihed,' 'noblehed' (both in *The Tale of Melusine*); 'onehed,' 'worldlihood' (Pecock); 'fulsomehed,' 'fairhed' (both in *King Horn*); 'sinfulhed,' 'right-wisshed,' 'chasthed,' 'tamehed' (all in *The Story of Genesis*); 'wantonhed,' 'evenhood' (*Promptorium Parvulorum*); 'fulhed,' 'mightihed,' 'cursedhed,' 'filthehed,' 'drunkenhed' (all in Wiclif); 'heedless-hood,' 'seemlihed,' 'drearihed,' 'drowsihed,' 'livelihed,' 'goodlihed,' 'beastlihed' (all in Spenser). In place of these we have 'business,' 'weariness,' 'holiness,' and so on with the rest.

Then again, words not a few, once ending in 'head' or 'hood,' have relinquished this in favour of 'ship'; thus 'postlehead' (Wiclif), 'disciplehood,' 'headhood' (both in Pecock), have done this. Others, but they are fewer, for 'hood' have taken 'dom'; thus 'Christenhood' (Pecock) is 'Christendom' now; or for 'rick,' which survives only in 'bishoprick' ('hevenriche,' or kingdom of heaven, having long since disappeared), have taken the same; thus 'kingryke' (*Piers Ploughman*) or 'kunneriche' (*Proclamation of Henry III.*) is 'kingdom' now. As between 'head' and 'hood,' which are no more than variations of the same form, the latter has seriously encroached on the domain once occupied by the former. I quote a few instances, 'childhed,' 'manhed,' 'womanhed,' 'bretherhed' (all in Chaucer); 'falsehed' (Tyndal), 'widowhed' (Sibbald's *Glossary*). In all these 'head' has given way to 'hood.' I can adduce no instances in which the opposite tendency, 'head' taking the place of 'hood,' has displayed itself. Then

too many adjectives ending in 'ful' have changed this for 'ly' (= like); thus 'gastful,' 'lovelful,' 'grisful' (all in Wiclif), are severally now 'ghastly,' 'lovely,' 'grisly.' I shall note elsewhere the extensive perishing of adjectives ending in 'some.' Many of these, however, still survive, but with some other suffix—often with one which brings their component parts into harmony with one another; thus 'humoursome' survives in 'humorous,' 'laboursome' in 'laborious,' 'clamoursome' in 'clamorous,' 'adventuresome' (this however has been revived by Keats), in 'adventurous;' or sometimes where no such motive of making the word all of one piece can be traced, as in 'hatesum,' which is now 'hateful,' 'friendsome,' which is now 'friendly,' 'mirksome' (Spenser), which is now 'murky,' and 'thoughtsome,' which is now 'thoughtful.' This chapter in the history of our language has hitherto attracted almost no attention. No catalogues of these words, so far as I know, have yet been so much as attempted.

Let me trace, before this lecture comes to an end, the history of the rise of some words in the language, noting briefly the motives which may have first induced their creation or adoption, the resistance which they may have met, the remonstrances against them which were sometimes made, the authors who first introduced them. It is a curious chapter in the history of the language, and even a few scattered contributions to it will not be without their value.

Sometimes a word has been created to supply an urgent want, to fill up a manifest gap in the language. For example, that sin of sins, the undue love of self,

with the postponing of the interests of all others to our own, being a sin as old as the Fall, had yet for a long time no word to express it in English. Help was first sought from the Greek, and 'philauty' (*φιλαυτία*) more than once put forward by our scholars; but it found no popular acceptance. This failing, men turned to the Latin; one writer proposing to supply the want by calling the sin 'suicism,' and the man a 'suist,' as one seeking *his own* things ('sua'); but this with no better success; and our ethical terminology was here still incomplete, till some of the Puritan divines, drawing on native resources, devised 'selfish' and 'selfishness,' words to us seeming obvious enough, but which yet are little more than two hundred years old. A passage in Hacket's *Life of Archbishop Williams* marks the first rise of 'selfish,' and the quarter in which it rose: 'When they [the Presbyterians] saw that he was not *selfish* (it is a word of their own new mint),' &c.¹ In Whitlock's *Zootomia*,² there is another indication of its novelty: 'If constancy may be tainted with this *selfishness* (to use our *new wordings* of old and general actings).' It is Whitlock who in his *Grand Schismatic, or Suist Anatomized* first puts forward the words 'suist' and 'suicism.' 'Suicism' had not in his time the obvious objection of resembling 'suicide' too nearly, and being liable to be confused with it; for 'suicide' did not exist in the language till some twenty years later. Its coming up is marked by this protest in Phillips' *New World of Words*, 3rd edit., 1671: 'Nor less to be exploded is the word "*suicide*," which

¹ Part II. p. 144.

² 1654, D. 364.

may as well seem to participate of *sus* a sow, as of the pronoun *sui*.' In the *Index* to Jackson's *Works*, published two years later, it is still '*suicidium*'—'the horrid *suicidium* of the Jews at York.'¹

I should greatly like to see a collection, as complete as the industry of the collectors could make it, of all the notices in our literature, which serve as indications of the first appearance of new words in the language. These notices are of the most various kinds. Sometimes they are protests and remonstrances, as that just quoted, against a new word's introduction ; sometimes they are gratulations at the same ; while many, neither approving nor disapproving, merely state, or allow us to gather, the fact of a word's recent apparition. Many such notices are brought together in Richardson's *Dictionary*.² Neither are they wanting in *Todd's Johnson*. But the work is one which could only be accomplished by many lovers of their native tongue throwing into a common stock the results of their several studies.³ Our Elizabethan

¹ 'Suicide' is of later introduction into French. Génin (*Récréations Philol.* vol. i. p. 194) places it about the year 1738, and makes the Abbé Desfontaines its first sponsor. He is wrong, as is plain, in assuming that we borrowed it from the French, and that it did not exist in English till the middle of last century. The French complain that the fashion of suicide was borrowed from England. It is probable that the word was so.

² Thus one from Lord Bacon under 'essay ;' from Swift under 'banter ;' from Sir Thomas Elyot under 'mansuetude ;' from Lord Chesterfield under 'flirtation ;' from *The Spectator*, No. 537, under 'caricature ;' from Roger North under 'sham' (*Appendix*) ; from Dryden under 'mob,' 'philanthropy,' and 'witticism,' which last word Dryden claims for his own ; from Evelyn under 'miss ;' and from Milton under 'demagogue.'

³ As a slight sample of what might be accomplished here by

dramatists would yield much ; even the worthless plays of Charles the Second's time might prove of

the joint contributions of many, let me throw together references to a few such passages, which I do not think have found their way into our dictionaries. Thus add to that which Richardson has quoted on 'banter,' another from *The Tatler*, No. 230, marking the disfavour with which it was regarded at the first. On 'plunder' there are two instructive passages in Fuller's *Church History*, b. xi. §§ 4, 33 ; and b. ix. § 4 ; and one in Heylin's *Animadversions* thereupon, p. 196 ; on 'admiralty' see a note in Harington's *Ariosto*, b. xix. ; on 'maturity' Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governor*, i. 22 ; and on 'industry' the same, i. 23 ; on 'neophyte,' which made its first appearance in the Rheims Bible, a notice of Fulke's *Defence of the English Bible*, Parker Society's edition, p. 586, where he says 'neophyte is neither Greek, Latin, nor English ;' on 'fanatic' a passage in Fuller, *Mixt Contemplations on these Times*, § 50 ; and another in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, book x. c. 82 ; on 'panorama,' and marking its recent introduction (it is not in Johnson), a passage in Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, first published in 1803, but my reference is to the edition of 1814, p. 306. On 'accommodate,' and supplying a date for its first coming into popular use, see Shakespeare's *2 Henry IV.* Act 3, Sc. 2 ; on 'shrub,' Junius' *Etymologicon*, s. v. 'syrup ;' on 'sentiment' and 'cajole,' Skinner, s. vv., in his *Etymologicon* ('vox nuper civitate donata') ; on 'opera,' Evelyn's *Memoirs and Diary*, 1827, vol. i. pp. 189, 190 ; on 'umbrella,' Torriano's *Italian Proverbs*, 1666, p. 58 : 'ombrella is a certain canopy that in Italy we use to shelter ourselves with from the sun and the rain.' North (*Plutarch's Lives*, p. 469) speaks of 'fencers at unrebated foils whom the Romans call *gladiatores*.' 'Starvation' may have been an old word in Scotland, but it was unknown in England until used by Mr. Dundas, the first Lord Melville, therefore called 'Starvation Dundas,' in a debate on American affairs in 1775 (see *Letters of Horace Walpole and Mann*, vol. ii. p. 396, and Pegge's *Anecdotes of the English Language*, 1814, p. 38). We learn from a protest in *The Spectator*, No. 165, that

some service here. Early classical scholars like Sir Thomas Elyot, who wrote when Latin words, good, bad, and indifferent, were pouring into the language like a flood, and who from time to time passed their judgment on these ; the early translators, Protestant and Roman Catholic, of the Bible, who when they had exhausted more serious invective, fell foul of one another's English, and charged each other with bringing in new and un-English words ; the *Spectator*, the *Tatler*, the *Guardian*, and even the second and third-rate imitations of these, might all be consulted with advantage. Indeed it is hard to say beforehand in what unexpected quarter notices of the kind might not occur.

Let me observe that such a collection should include passages which supply *implicit* evidence for the non-existence of a word up to a certain date. It may be urged that it is difficult, nay, often impossible, to prove a negative ; yet when Bolingbroke wrote as follows, it is certain that 'isolated' did not exist in our language : 'The events we are witnesses of in the course of the longest life, appear to us very often original, unprepared, signal, and *unrelative* : if I may use such a word for want of a better in English. In French I

'pontoon,' 'fascine,' 'to reconnoitre,' were in 1704 novelties, which under the influence of the frequent bulletins were creeping into English. 'Avoid quaint terms as "originate"' is John Wesley's advice to his preachers. In Barlow's *Columbiad*, published in 1807, we on this side of the Atlantic first made acquaintance with the verb 'to utilize;' in a review of the poem in the *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1809, p. 25, there is an earnest, but as it has proved an ineffectual, remonstrance against the word. 'Millennial' comes there, as an American novelty, under the same condemnation.

would say *isolés*.' ¹ Compare Lord Chesterfield in a letter to Bishop Chenevix, of date March 12, 1767: 'I have survived almost all my contemporaries, and as I am too old to make new acquaintances, I find myself *isolé*.' Fuller would have scarcely spoken of a 'meteor of foolish fire,' ² if 'ignis fatuus,' which has now quite put out 'firedrake,' the older name for these meteors, had not been, when he wrote, still strange to the language. So too when Sir Walter Raleigh spoke of 'strange visions which are also called *panici terrores*,' ³ it is tolerably plain that 'panic' was not yet recognized among us. In like manner when Holland, translating Pliny's long account of the sculptors and sculpture of antiquity, never once uses the word 'sculptor,' but always 'imager' instead, I feel tolerably sure that 'sculptor' had not yet come into existence. The use of 'noctambulones' by Donne makes me pretty certain that in his time 'somniaambulist' had not been invented. When Hacket ⁴ speaks of 'the *cimici* in our bedsteads,' these unsavoury insects had scarcely appropriated to themselves the name which now they bear. When the anonymous annotator on Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* speaks of 'ethice' (*ἠθίκη*) we confidently conclude that 'ethics' was a word which had not yet got a footing in the language. So, too, it is tolerably certain that 'amphibious' was not yet English, when one writes (in 1618): 'We are like those creatures called ἀμφίβια, which live in water or on land.' Ζωολογία, as the title of an English book published in 1649, makes it

¹ *Notes and Queries*, No. 226. ² *Comm. on Ruth*, p. 38.

³ *Hist. of the World*, iii. 5, 8.

⁴ *Life of Archbishop Williams*, vol. ii. p. 182.

clear that 'zoology' was not yet in our vocabulary, as ζωόφυτον (Jackson) proves the same for 'zoophyte,' ἐκλεκτικοὶ (Rust ;¹ compare 'eclectici' in Fuller) for 'eclectics,' θεοκρατία (Jeremy Taylor) for 'theocracy,' ἄθεοι (Ascham) for 'atheists,' ἐφήμεροι (Cowley) for 'ephemeral,' and πολύθεισμος (Gell ; it is a word of his own coining) for 'polytheism.'²

It is not merely new words, but new uses of old

¹ *Funeral Sermon on Jeremy Taylor.*

² One precaution, let me observe, would be necessary in the collecting, or rather in the adopting, of any statements about the newness of a word—for the statements themselves, even when erroneous, should be noted—namely, that no one's affirmation ought to be accepted simply and at once as to this novelty, seeing that all here are liable to error. Thus more words than one which Sir Thomas Elyot indicates as new in his time, 'magnanimity' for example (*The Governor*, ii. 14), are frequent in Chaucer. 'Sentiment,' which Skinner affirmed to have only recently, in his own time, obtained the rights of English citizenship, continually recurs in the same. Ascham (*The School Master*, p. 13, ed. 1863) evidently supposes that he is the first to put 'heady' and 'brainsick,' 'fit and proper words' as he declares them, into circulation ; which yet could scarcely be the case. Wotton, using 'character,' would imply that it was a novelty in the language (*Survey of Education*, p. 321) ; it is of constant recurrence in Spenser, and is used by Wiclif. Charles Boyle, in the dispute on the *Epistles of Phalaris*, in which he so unluckily engaged ('impar congressus Achilli'), excepts against Bentley's use, among other words, of the following, 'repudiate,' 'concede,' 'vernacular,' 'timid,' 'putid,' and 'idiom ;' 'every one of which,' Bentley replies, 'was in print before I used them, and most of them before I was born' (*Preface*, p. 54). In *Notes and Queries*, No. 255, there is a useful catalogue of recent neologies in our speech, while yet at least half a dozen in the list have not the smallest right to be so considered.

ones, which should thus be noted, with the time of their first coming up. Thus Sir John Davies' epigram 'Of a Gull' tells us when this 'new term,' as he calls it, was first transferred from foolish birds to as foolish men. Or take the two following quotations, in proof that the modern use of 'edify' and 'edification' began among the Puritans ; and first this from Oldham :

'The graver sort dislike all poetry,
Which does not, as they call it, *edify* ;'

and this from South : 'All being took up and busied, some in pulpits and some in tubs, in the grand work of preaching and holding forth, and that of *edification*, as the word then went,' &c. Here too the evidence may not be positive, but negative. Thus when I read in Fuller of 'that beast in the Brazile which in fourteen days goes no further than a man may throw a stone, called therefore by the Spaniards *pigritia*,' I am tolerably certain that the *aï*, as the natives call it, had not yet obtained among us the name 'sloth,' which now it bears.

A few observations in conclusion on the deliberate introduction of words to supply felt omissions in a language, and the limits within which this or any other conscious interference with it is desirable or possible. Long before the time when a people begin to reflect upon their language, and to give an account to themselves either of its merits or defects, it has been fixed as regards structure in immutable forms ; the sphere in which any alterations or modifications, addition to it, or subtraction from it, deliberately devised and carried out, are possible, is very limited indeed. The

great laws that rule it are so firmly established that almost nothing can be taken from it, which it has got ; almost nothing added to it, which it has *not* got. It will travel indeed in certain courses of change ; but it would be almost as easy for us to alter the course of a planet as to alter these. This is sometimes a subject of regret with those who see what appear to them manifest defects or blemishes in their language, and at the same time ways by which, as they fancy, these could be remedied or removed. And yet this is well ; since for once that these redressers of real or fancied wrongs, these suppliers of things lacking, would mend, we may be tolerably confident that ten times, probably a hundred times, they would mar ; letting go that which would better have been retained ; retaining that which was overlived and out of date ; and in many ways interfering with those processes of a natural logic, which in a living language are evermore working themselves out. The genius of a language, unconsciously presiding over all its transformations, and conducting them to definite issues, will prove a far truer and far safer guide, than the artificial wit, however subtle, of any single man, or of any association of men. For the genius of a language is the sense and inner conviction entertained by the mass of those who speak it, of what it ought to be, and of the methods by which it will most nearly approach its ideal perfection ; and while a pair of eyes, or half a dozen pairs of eyes, may see much, a million of eyes will certainly see more.

It is only with the words, and not with the forms and laws of a language, that any interference is possible. Something, indeed much, may here be accom-

plished by wise masters, in the rejecting of that which deforms or mars, the allowing and adopting of that which will complete or enrich. Those who have set such objects before them, and who, knowing the limits of the possible, have kept within these, have often effected much. No language affords a better proof and illustration of this than the German. When the patriotic Germans began to wake up to a consciousness of the enormous encroachments which foreign languages, Latin, French, and Italian, had made on their native tongue, the lodgements which they had therein effected, and the danger which lay so near, that it should cease to be a language at all, but only a mingle-mangle, a motley patchwork of many tongues, without any unity or inner coherence, various Societies were instituted among them, at the beginning and during the course of the seventeenth century, for the recovering of what was lost of their own language, for the expelling of that which had intruded upon it from abroad ; and these with excellent results.

But more effectual than these learned Societies were the efforts of single writers, several of whom in this merited eminently well of Germany and of the German tongue.¹ Numerous words now accepted by the whole nation are yet of such recent introduction that it is possible to designate the writer who first substituted them for some affected Gallicism or pedantic Latinism. Thus to Lessing his fellow-country-

¹ There is an admirable essay by Leibnitz with this view (*Opera*, vol. vi. part 2, pp. 6-51) in French and German, with this title, *Considérations sur la Culture et la Perfection de la Langue Allemande*.

men owe the substitution of 'zartgefühl' for 'délicatesse,' of 'wesenheit' for 'essence.' It was he who suggested to the translator of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, 'empfindsam' as a word which would correspond to our 'sentimental;' he too who recalled 'bieder,' with which every schoolboy is familiar now, from the forgetfulness of centuries. Voss (1786) first employed 'alterthümlich' for 'antik,' Winckelmann 'denkbild' for 'idee.' Wieland was the author or reviver of a multitude of excellent words, for some of which he had to do earnest battle at the first; such were 'seligkeit,' 'anmuth,' 'entzückung,' 'festlich,' 'entwirren,' with many more. But no one was so jealous for the cleansing of the temple of German speech from unworthy intruders as Campe, the author of the Dictionary. For 'maskerade,' he was fain to substitute 'larventanz,' for 'ballet' 'schautanz,' for 'lauvine' 'schneesturz,' for 'detachment' 'abtrab,' for 'electricität' 'reibfeuer.' It was a novelty when Büsching called his great work on geography 'Erdbeschreibung' (1754) instead of 'Geographie;' while 'schnellpost' for 'diligence,' 'zerrbild' for 'caricatur,' are also of recent introduction. Of 'wörterbuch' itself Jacob Grimm tells us he can find no example dating earlier than 1719.

Some of these reformers, it must be owned, proceeded with more zeal than knowledge, while others did what in them lay to make the whole movement absurd—even as there ever hang on the skirts of a noble movement, be it in literature or politics or higher things yet, those who by extravagance and excess contribute their little all to bring ridicule and contempt upon it. Thus in the reaction against foreign interlopers, and in the zeal to rid the language of

them, some would have disallowed words consecrated by longest use ; thus Campe, who in the main did such good service here, desired to replace ‘apostel’ by ‘lehrbote ;’ or they understood so little what words deserved to be called foreign, that they would fain have gotten rid of such words as these, ‘vater,’ ‘mutter,’ ‘wein,’ ‘fenster,’ ‘meister,’ ‘kelch ;’¹ the three former belonging to the Gothic dialects by exactly the same right as they do to the Latin and the Greek ; while the other three have been naturalized so long that to propose at this day to expel them is as though, having passed an Alien Act for the banishment of all foreigners, we should proceed to include under that name, and drive from the kingdom, the descendants of the French Protestants who found refuge here when Rochelle was taken, or even of the Flemings who came over in the time of our Edwards. One notable enthusiast proposed to create an entirely new nomenclature for all the mythological personages of the Greek and Roman pantheons, although these, one would think, might have been allowed, if any, to retain their Greek and Latin names. Cupid was to be ‘Lustkind,’ Flora ‘Bluminne,’ Aurora ‘Röthin ;’ instead of Apollo schoolboys were to speak of ‘Singhold ;’ instead of Pan of ‘Schaflied ;’ instead of Jupiter of ‘Helfevater,’ with other absurdities to match. We may well beware (and the warning extends much further than to the matter in hand) of making a good cause ridiculous by our manner of supporting it, by acting as though exaggerations on one side were best redressed by equal exaggerations on the other.

¹ Fuchs, *Zur Geschichte und Beurtheilung der Fremdwörter im Deutschen*, Dessau, 1842, pp. 85-91. Compare Jean Paul, *Æsthetik*, §§ 83-85.

LECTURE V.

DIMINUTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

I OBSERVED in my latest lecture but one that it is the essential character of a living language to be in flux and flow, to be gaining and losing, assimilating to itself and rejecting from itself; and indeed no one who has not given some attention to the subject, would at all imagine the enormous amount of these gains, and not less the enormous amount of these losses—or, for reasons already stated, and because all that comes is not gain, and all is not loss that goes, let us say the enormous additions and diminutions which in a few centuries find place in that domain of a language which is mainly liable to these changes—I mean its vocabulary, in its Dictionary, that is, as contrasted with its Grammar. It is not indeed with a language altogether as it is with a human body, of which the component parts are said to be in such unceasing flux and flow, with so much taken from it, and so much added to it, that in a very few years no particle of it remains unchanged. It is not, I say, exactly thus. There are stable elements, and, so to speak, constant quantities in a language, which determine its character—the group, that is, or family to which it belongs—secure its identity, and attest its continuity. Such is the gram-

mar of a language, being as it were the osseous structure and framework of it; which changes slowly, and in certain features changes not at all; in this contrasting strongly with the vocabulary, being as this is the flesh which clothes these bones; and in which we may trace a never-ceasing change, a coming and going which is nothing less than astonishing, when we take means a little to measure its amount. Of acquisitions which our language has made something has been said already. Of the diminutions it is now our business to speak.

It is certain that all languages must, or at least all languages do in the end, perish. They run their course; not all at the same rate, for the tendency to change is different in different languages, both from internal causes (mechanism and the like), and also from causes external to the language, and laid in the varying velocities of social progress and social decline; but so it is, that, sooner or later, they have all their youth, their manhood, their old age, their decrepitude, their final dissolution. Not indeed that they disappear, leaving no traces behind them, even when this last has arrived. On the contrary, out of their death a new life comes forth; they pass into other forms, the materials of which they were composed are organized in new shapes and according to other laws of life. Thus, for example, the Latin perishes as a living language; and yet perishes only to live again, though under somewhat different conditions, in the four daughter languages, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese; or the six, if we count the Provençal and Wallachian. Still in their own proper being they pass away. There are dead records of what they were in

books ; not living men who speak them any more. Seeing then that they thus perish, the possibilities of this decay and death must have existed in them from the beginning.

Nor is this all ; but in such strong-built fabrics as these, the causes which thus bring about their final dissolution must have been actually at work very long before the results are so visible as that they cannot any longer be mistaken. Indeed, very often it is with them as with states, which, while in some respects they are knitting and strengthening, in others are already unfolding the seeds of their future and, it may be, still remote dissolution. Equally in these and those, in states and in languages, it would be a serious mistake to assume that all up to a certain point and period is growth and gain, while all after is decay and loss. On the contrary, there are long periods during which growth in some directions is going hand in hand with decay in others ; losses in one kind are being compensated, or more than compensated, by gains in another ; during which a language changes, but only as the bud changes into the flower, and the flower into the fruit. A time indeed arrives when the growth and gains, becoming ever fewer, cease to constitute any longer a compensation for the losses and the decay, which are ever becoming more ; when the forces of disorganization and death at work are stronger than those of life and order. But until that crisis and turning-point has arrived, we may be quite justified in speaking of the losses of a language, and may esteem them most real, without in the least thereby implying that its climacteric is passed, and its downward course begun. This may yet be far dis-

tant : and therefore when I dwell on certain losses and diminutions which our own has undergone or is undergoing, you will not suppose that I am presenting it to you as now travelling that downward course to dissolution and death. I have no such intention. It in some respects it is losing, in others it is gaining. Nor is everything which it lets go, a loss ; for this too, the parting with a word in which there is no true help, the dropping of a cumbrous or superfluous form, may itself be sometimes a most real gain. English is undoubtedly becoming different from what it has been ; but only different in that it is passing into another stage of its development ; only different, as the fruit is different from the flower, and the flower from the bud ; not having in all points the same excellencies which it once had, but with excellencies as many and as real as it ever had ; possessing, it may be, less of beauty, but more of usefulness ; not, perhaps, serving the poet so well, but serving the historian and philosopher better than before.

With one observation more I will enter on the special details of my subject. It is, indeed, only a saying over again what I said at the outset of this lecture. The losses or diminutions of a language differ in one respect from the gains or acquisitions—namely, that those are of two kinds, while these are only of one. The gains are only in words ; it never puts forth in the course of its later evolution a new power ; it never makes for itself a new case, or a new tense, or a new comparative. But the losses are both in words and in powers. In addition to the words which it drops, it leaves behind it, as it travels onward, cases which it once possessed ; renounces the

employment of tenses which it once used ; forgets its dual ; is content with one termination both for masculine and feminine, and so on. Nor is this a peculiar feature of one language, but the universal rule in all. 'In all languages,' as has been well said, 'there is a constant tendency to relieve themselves of that precision which chooses a fresh symbol for every shade of meaning, to lessen the amount of nice distinction, and detect as it were a royal road to the interchange of opinion.' For example, a vast number of languages had at an early period of their development, besides the singular and plural, a dual number, some even a trinal, which they have let go at a later. But what I mean by a language renouncing its powers I hope to make clearer in my next lecture. This much I have here said on the matter, to explain and justify a division which I propose to make, considering first the losses of the English language in *words*, and then in *powers*, the former constituting my theme in the present lecture, and the latter in one that will succeed it.

And first, there is going forward a continual extinction of the words in our language—as indeed in every other. We hardly realize to ourselves the immense losses which we have suffered, till we take the extinct words of some single formation, and seek to make as complete a list of these as we can. Then indeed we perceive that they are thick as the autumn leaves in Vallombrosa. Take, for instance, the adjectives with the suffix 'ful.' The list which I offer does not make the remotest claim to completeness, while yet, I am sure, it is longer than any list of the surviving

words of the same formation which could be gotten together. It is as follows: 'annoyful' (Chaucer), 'availful' (Florio), 'avengeful,' 'aviseful' (both in Spenser), 'batful' (= fruitful, Drayton), 'behoveful,' 'blameful' (both in Shakespeare), 'blushful' (Thomson), 'causeful' (Sidney), 'chanceful' (Spenser), 'chargeful' (Shakespeare), 'charmful' (Cowley), 'comfortful' (Levins), 'conceitful' (Spenser), 'contemptful' (Feltham), 'crimeful' (Shakespeare), 'cursful' (Wiclif), 'dangerful' (Udal), 'dareful' (Shakespeare), 'darkful' (Wiclif), 'deathful' (Shakespeare), 'debateful' (Spenser), 'delayful' (Chapman), 'dernful' (Spenser), 'desertful' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'desireful' (Udal), 'despairful,' 'deviceful,' 'discordful' (all in Spenser), 'diseaseful' (Bacon), 'dislikeful' (Spenser), 'dispatchful' (Pope), 'distractful' (Heywood), 'distressful' (Shakespeare), 'doomful' (Spenser), 'dreamful' (Mickle), 'dureful' (Spenser), 'excessful' (Wiclif), 'expenseful' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'faultful' (Shakespeare), 'feastful' (Milton), 'fiendful' (Marlowe), 'formful' (Thomson), 'fraudful' (Shakespeare), 'friskful' (Thomson), 'gameful' (Chapman), 'gastful,' 'gazeful,' 'gladful,' 'griefful' (all in Spenser), 'griesful' (Wiclif), 'groanful' (Spenser), 'gustful' (Jeremy Taylor), 'heapful' (Holland), 'heryful' (Wiclif), 'hirkful' (Levins), 'intreatful' (Spenser), 'lateful,' 'leveful,' 'lightful' (all in Wiclif), 'listful,' 'lothful,' 'loveful' (all in Spenser), 'masterful' (Holland), 'mazeful' (Spenser), 'medeful' (*Piers Ploughman*), 'menseful' (Durham dialect), 'mightful' (*Townley Mysteries*), 'mischiefful' (Paynell), 'mistful' (Shakespeare), 'moistful' (Sylvester), 'molestful' (Barrow), 'moneful' (Spenser), 'noiful' (Wiclif), 'noiseful' (Dryden), 'offenceful'

(Shakespeare), 'pensiful' (= pensive, Sir T. Elyot), 'plaintful' (Shakespeare), 'poisonful' (Gurnall), 'praiseful' (Sidney), 'prideful' (Whitehead), 'quemful' (Richard Rolle de Hampole), 'rageful' (Gent), 'rebukeful' (Levins), 'recourseful' (Drayton), 'resentful' (Pope), 'scareful' (Golding), 'scatheful' (Wiclif), 'scentful' (Browne), 'senseful' (Sylvester), 'shapeful' (Chapman), 'shenful' (Wiclif), 'smartful' (Florio), 'spaceful' (Sandys), 'speedful' (Wiclif), 'spelful' (Hoole), 'spleenful' (Chapman), 'stomachful' (Hall), 'streamful' (Drayton), 'strengthful' (Wiclif), 'strife-ful' (Spenser), 'supportful' (Chapman), 'tideful,' 'timeful' (both in Wiclif), 'threatful' (Spenser), 'toyful' (Donne), 'tristful' (Shakespeare), 'unbelieveful' (Wiclif), 'wailful' (Shakespeare), 'weepful' (Wiclif), 'worthful' (*Ormulum*), 'wordful' (see Bosworth), 'wrackful' (Chapman), 'wreakful' (Spenser), 'wretchful' (Wiclif).

When we ask ourselves what are the causes which have led to this immense mortality, why in that great struggle for existence which is going on here as in every other domain of life, this still makes part of the living army of words, while that has fallen dead, or been dismissed to drag out an obscure provincial existence ; why oftentimes one word has been displaced by another, as it seems to us not better but worse ; or, again, why certain families of words, or words formed after certain schemes and patterns, seem exposed to more than the ordinary chances of mortality, it is not always easy to give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Causes no doubt in every case there are. We can ascribe little, if indeed anything here, to mere hazard or caprice. Hazard might

cause one man to drop the use of a word, but not a whole people to arrive at a tacit consent to employ it no more ; while without this tacit consent it could not have become obsolete. Caprice, too, is an element which may be eliminated when we have to do with multitudes ; for in such case the caprice of one will traverse and defeat the caprice of another, leaving matters very much where they were. But the causes oftentimes are hard to discover ; they lie deep-hidden in the genius of the language and in the tendencies of it at particular periods, these affecting speakers and writers who are quite unconscious of the influence thus exercised upon them.¹ Much here must remain unexplained ; but some suggestion may be offered, which shall account for some, though by no means all, of the facts which here come under the eye.

And first, men do not want, or fancy that they do not want certain words, and so suffer them to drop out of use. A language in the vigorous acquisitive periods of its existence has generated, or has in other ways got together from different quarters, a larger number of words, each, it may be, with its separate shade of meaning, at all events with its separate etymology, to

¹ Dwight (*Modern Phonology*, 2nd series, p. 208): 'Great, silent, yet determinative laws of criticism, and so, of general acceptance or condemnation, are ever at work upon words, deciding their position among mankind at large, as if before a court without any appeal. Their action is certain, though undefinable to our vision, like the seemingly blind laws of the weather ; which yet, however multiplied in their sources, or subtle in their action, rule infallibly not only the questions of human labour and of human harvests, but also, to a great extent, those of human health, power, and enjoyment.'

connote some single object, than can be taken into actual use ; more at any rate than the great body of the speakers of a language, with their lazy mental habits, are prepared to take up. Thus we speak at this day of a 'miser,' and perhaps in popular language of a 'hunks' and a 'skinflint ;' but what has become of a 'gripe,' a 'huddle,' a 'snudge,' a 'chinch,' a 'micher,' a 'pinchpenny,' a 'pennyfather,' a 'nipcheese,' a 'nipscreed,' a 'nipfarthing,' a 'clutchfast,' a 'kumbix' (κίμβιξ) ? They have all or nearly all quite dropped out of the living language of men, and, as I cannot doubt, for the reason just suggested, namely, that they were more and more various than men would be at pains to discriminate, and having discriminated, to employ.¹

Let me indicate another cause of the disappearance of words. Arts, trades, amusements in the course of time are superseded by others. These had each more or less a nomenclature peculiarly its own. But with the disappearance of these a large number of words, which in the first instance were proper and peculiar to them, will have vanished likewise. Archery in all its more serious aspects is now extinct ; and the group of words is by no means small, which with it have ceased to belong to our living language any more. How

¹ Diez (*Gram. d. Roman. Sprachen*, vol. i. p. 53) traces to the same cause the disappearance in the whole group of Romanic languages, of so many words which from their wide use in Latin we might have expected to remain ; thus 'arx' was rendered unnecessary by 'castellum,' 'equus' by 'caballus,' 'gramen' by 'herba,' 'janua' by 'ostium,' and 'porta,' 'sidus' by 'astrum,' 'magnus' by 'grandis,' 'pulcher' by 'bellus,' 'sævus' by 'ferox,' and have thus vanished out of the languages descended from the Latin.

many readers would need to turn to a glossary, if they would know so much as what a 'fletcher' is.¹ Or turn to any old treatise on hawking. What a multitude of terms are there assumed as familiar to the reader, which have now quite dropped out of our common knowledge. Nor let it be urged that these can have constituted no very real loss, seeing that they were only used within the narrow circle, and comparatively narrow it must have always been, of those addicted to this sport. This is not the case. Words travel beyond their proper sphere; are used in secondary senses, and in these secondary senses are everybody's words, while in their primary sense they may remain the possession only of a few.

When I spoke a little while ago of the extinction of such a multitude of words, I did not, as you will have observed already, refer merely to *tentative* words, candidates for admission into the language, offered to, but never in any true sense accepted by it, such as those of which I quoted some in an earlier lecture; but to such as either belonged to its primitive stock, or, if not this, had yet been domiciled in it so long, that they seemed to have found there a lasting home. The destruction has reached these quite as much as those. Thus not a few words of the purest old English stock, some having lived on into the Elizabethan period or beyond it, have finally dropped out of our vocabulary; sometimes leaving a gap which has never since been filled; but their places oftener taken by others which have come up in their room. That beautiful word 'wanhope,' hope, that is, which has

¹ Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*, 1860, p. 267.

wholly *waned*, or despair, long held its ground ; it occurs in Gascoigne ; being the latest survivor of a whole family of words which continued much longer in Scotland than with us ; of which some perhaps continue there still. These are but a few of them : ‘*wanthrift*’ for extravagance ; ‘*wanluck*,’ ‘*wanwierd*,’ or ‘*wanhap*,’ misfortune ; ‘*wanlust*,’ languor ; ‘*wanwit*,’ folly ; ‘*wangrace*,’ wickedness ; ‘*wantrust*’ (Chaucer), suspicion ; ‘*wantruth*’ (*Metrical Homilies*), falsehood. ‘*Skinker*’ (no very graceful word), for cupbearer, is used by Shakespeare, and lasted to Dryden’s time and beyond it. Spenser uses often ‘*to welk*’ (*welken*) as to fade, ‘*to sty*’ as to mount, ‘*to hery*’ as to glorify or praise, ‘*to halse*’ as to embrace, ‘*teene*’ as vexation or grief : Shakespeare ‘*to tarre*’ as to provoke, ‘*to sperr*’ as to enclose or bar in. Holland has ‘*specht*’ for woodpecker, or tree-jobber as it used oftener to be called ; ‘*reise*’ for journey, ‘*frimm*’ for lusty or strong. ‘*To tind*,’ surviving in ‘*tinder*,’ occurs in Bishop Sanderson ; ‘*to nimm*’ (*nehmen*) in Fuller. ‘*Nesh*,’ soft through moisture, good Saxon-English once, still lives on in some of our provincial dialects, with not a few of the other words which I have just named. Thus ‘*leer*’ for empty, and ‘*heft*,’ that which only by an effort can be heaved up (used by Shakespeare), ‘*to fettle*’ (it is employed by Swift), are common on the lips of our southern peasantry to this day.

A number of vigorous compounds we have lost and let go, or suffered to retire into obscure provincial existence. Except for Shakespeare we might have quite forgotten that young men of hasty fiery valour were once named ‘*hotspurs* ;’ and this even now is for

us rather the proper name of one than the designation of all.¹ Anstere old men, 'severe ancients' as Holland describes, such as, in Falstaff's words, 'hate us youth,' were 'grimsirs' or 'grimsires' once (Massinger); a foe that wore the semblance of a friend was a 'heavy friend;' a mischief-maker a 'coal-carrier;' an impudent railer a 'saucy jack' (all these in Golding); a cockered favourite was a 'whiteboy' (Fuller); a drunkard an 'aleknight,' a 'maltworm;' an old woman an 'old trot;' an ill-behaved girl a 'naughty pack' (Golding), a 'lightskirts' (Bishop Hall); a dependant a 'hangby;' a soldier who of evil will ('malin gré') shirked his share of duty and danger a 'malingerer'—the word is familiar enough to military men, but not in our dictionaries;—a sluggard a 'slowback;' banditti 'woodkerns;' an ignoble place of refuge a 'creephole' (Henry More); entertainments of song or music were 'ear-sports' (Holland); a hideous concert of all most discordant noises a 'black-sanctus;' well-merited chastisement 'whipping-cheer' (Stubbs); pleasant drink 'merrygodown' (Golding); 'double-diligent' (Golding) was needlessly officious; 'snoutfair' an epithet applied to a woman who, having beauty, had no other gifts, mental or moral, to commend her; 'mother-naked' (revived by Carlyle), finds its explanation at Job i. 21; 1 Tim. vi. 7. Who too but must acknowledge the beauty of such a phrase as 'weeping-ripe' (Shakespeare), ready, that is, to burst into tears, the 'crying-ripe' of Beaumont and Fletcher, the ἀπρίδακρυς of the Greeks?

¹ See Holland, *Livy*, p. 922; Baxter, *Life and Times*, p. 39; Rogers, *Matrimonial Honour*, p. 233.

And as words, so also phrases are forgotten. 'From the teeth outward' to express professions which spring from no root in the heart of him who makes them, has so approved itself to Carlyle that he has called it back into use. How expressive too are many other of the proverbial phrases which we have suffered to fall through; as for instance 'to make a coat for the moon,' to attempt something in its nature every way impossible; 'to tread the shoe awry,' to make a *faux pas*; 'to play rex,' to domineer; 'to weep Irish,' to affect a grief which is not felt within, as do the hired mourners at an Irish wake. But these are legion, and quite impossible to enumerate, so that we must content ourselves with the examples here given.

An almost unaccountable caprice seems often to preside over the fortunes of words, and to determine which should live and which die. Of them quite as much as of books it may be affirmed, *habent sua fata*. Thus in instances out of number a word lives on as a verb, but has perished as a noun; we say 'to embarrass,' but no longer an 'embarrass;'; 'to revile,' but not, with Chapman and Milton, a 'revile;'; 'to dispose,' but not a 'dispose;'; 'to retire,' but not a 'retire' (Milton); 'to wed,' but not a 'wed;'; 'to infest,' but we use no longer the adjective 'infest.' Or with a reversed fortune a word lives on as a noun, but has perished as a verb; thus as a noun substantive, a 'slug,' but no longer 'to slug,' or render slothful; a 'child,' but no longer 'to child' ('*childing* autumn,' Shakespeare); a 'rape,' but not 'to rape' (South); a 'rogue,' but not 'to rogue;'; 'malice,' but not 'to malice;'; a 'path,' but not 'to path' (Shakespeare); or as a noun adjective, 'serene,' but not 'to serene,' a

beautiful word, by us let go, as 'sereiner' by the French ;¹ 'meek,' but not 'to meek' (Wiclif) ; 'fond,' but not 'to fond' (Dryden) ; 'dead,' but not 'to dead ;' 'intricate,' but 'to intricate' (Jeremy Taylor) no longer. So too we have still the adjective 'plashy,' but a 'plash,' signifying a wet place, no more.

Or again, the affirmative remains, but the negative is gone ; thus, 'wisdom,' 'profit,' 'bold,' 'sad,' 'deadly,' but not any more 'unwisdom,' 'unprofit,' 'unbold,' 'unsad,' 'undeadly' (all in Wiclif) ; 'cunning,' but not 'uncunning ;' 'manhood,' 'wit,' 'mighty,' 'tall,' 'strange,' but not 'unmanhood,' 'unwit,' 'unmighty,' 'untall,' 'unstrange' (all in Chaucer) ; 'tame,' but not 'untame' (Jackson) ; 'buxom,' but not 'unbuxom' (Dryden) ; 'hasty,' but not 'unhasty' (Spenser) ; 'blithe,' but not 'unblithe ;' 'idle,' but not 'unidle' (Sidney) ; 'base,' but not 'unbase' (Daniel) ; 'ease,' but not 'unease' (Hacket) ; 'lust,' but not 'unlust' (Coverdale) ; 'repentance,' but not 'unrepentance ;' 'remission,' but not 'irremission' (Donne) ; 'science,' but not 'nescience' (Glanvill) ; 'to know,' but not 'to unknow' (Wiclif) ; 'to give,' but not 'to ungive ;' 'to hallow,' but not 'to unhal-

¹ How many words modern French has lost which are most vigorous and admirable, the absence of which can only now be supplied by a circumlocution or by some less excellent word—'Oseur,' 'affranchisseur' (Amyot), 'mépriseur,' 'murmureur,' 'blandisseur' (Bossuet), 'abuseur' (Rabelais), 'désabusement,' 'rancœur,' are all obsolete at the present ; and so 'désaimer,' to cease to love ('disamare' in Italian), 'guirlander,' 'stériliser,' 'blandissant,' 'ordonnement' (Montaigne), with innumerable others. La Bruyère in his *Caractères*, c. 14, laments the loss, oftentimes inexplicable, of various excellent words in French.

low' (Coverdale) ; 'to remember,' but not 'to disremember' (=to forget); this last, however, is still common in Ireland. Or, with a curious variation from this, the negative survives, while the affirmative is gone ; thus 'wiely' (Chaucer) survives only in 'unwiely ;' 'couth' and 'couthly' (both in Spenser), only in 'uncouth' and 'uncouthly ;' 'speakable' (Milton), in 'unspeakable ;' 'pregnable' (Holland), in 'impregnable ;' 'vincible' (J. Taylor), in 'invincible ;' 'ruly' (Foxye), in 'unruly ;' 'gainly' (Henry More), in 'ungainly ;' these last two were serviceable words, and have been ill lost, 'gainly' being still common in the West Riding ; 'exorable' (Holland) and 'evitable' survive only in 'inexorable' and 'inevitable ;' 'faultless' remains, but hardly 'faultful' (Shakespeare) ; 'shapeless,' but not 'shapeful' (Chapman); 'semble' (Foxye), except as a technical law term, has disappeared, while 'dissemble' continues ; 'simulation' (Coverdale) in like manner is gone, but 'dissimulation' remains. So also of other pairs one has been taken, and one left ; 'height,' or 'highth,' as Milton better spelt it, remains, but 'lowth' (Becon) is gone ; 'underling' remains, but 'overling' has perished. 'Exhort' continues, but 'dehort,' a word whose place 'dissuade' does not exactly supply, has escaped us ; 'righteousness,' or 'rightwiseness,' as once more accurately written, remains, but 'wrongwiseness' has been taken ; 'inroad' continues, but 'outroad' (Holland) has disappeared ; 'levant' lives, but 'ponent' (Holland) has died ; 'to extricate' continues, but, as we saw just now, 'to intricate' does not ; so too, 'parricide,' but not 'filicide' (Holland) ; 'womanish,' but not 'mannish' (Shakespeare). Again, of whole

groups of words formed on some particular scheme it may be only a single specimen will survive. Thus 'gainsay' (= againsay) survives ; but 'gainstrive' (Foe), 'gainstand,' 'gaincope' (Golding), and other similarly formed words, exist no longer. 'Praiseworthy,' 'trustworthy,' 'noteworthy,' 'seaworthy,' are perhaps the only survivors of a group that numbered once 'shameworthy' (Wiclif), 'japeworthy' (Chaucer), 'kissworthy' (Sidney), 'thankworthy' (English Bible), 'crownworthy' (Ben Jonson), 'painworthy' (Spenser), 'deathworthy' (Shakespeare), 'stalworthy,' or worth stealing (Skelton), and very probably more. In like manner 'foolhardy' alone remains out of at least five adjectives formed on the same pattern ; thus 'foollarge,' as expressive a word as 'prodigal,' occurs in Chaucer, and 'foolhasty,' found also in him, lived on to the time of Holland ; while 'foolhappy' is in Spenser, and 'foolbold' in Bale. 'Laughing-stock' we still use ; but 'gazing-stock' (English Bible), 'wondring-stock,' 'jesting-stock' (both in Coverdale), 'mocking-stock' (Sternhold and Hopkins), 'playing-stock' (North), 'pointing-stock' (Shakespeare), have all disappeared. 'Stedfast' remains, but 'shamefast,' 'rootfast,' 'bedfast' (= bedridden), 'homefast,' 'housefast,' or confined to the house, 'masterfast,' or engaged to a master (Skelton), 'weatherfast' (Cleveland dialect), 'trothfast' (Cumbrian), 'handfast' (= betrothed), 'wordfast' (see Bosworth), with others, are all gone. We have 'twilight,' but 'twibil' (= bipennis, Chapman), 'twifight' (= duel), are extinct.

It is a real loss that the comparative 'rather' should now stand alone, having dropped alike the positive, 'rathe,' and the superlative, 'rathest,' 'Rathe,' or

early, though a graceful word, and not fallen quite out of popular remembrance, being embalmed in the *Lycidas* of Milton,

‘And the *rathe* primrose, which forsaken dies,’

might be suffered to share the common lot of so many others which have perished, though worthy to live; but the disuse of ‘*rathest*’ is a real loss to the language, and the more so, that ‘*liefest*’ is gone too. ‘*Rather*’ expresses the Latin ‘*potius* ;’ but ‘*rathest*’ being obsolete, we have no word, unless ‘*soonest*’ may be accepted as such, to express ‘*potissimum*,’ or the preference not of one way over another or over certain others, but of one over all ; which we therefore effect by aid of various circumlocutions. Nor has ‘*rathest*’ been so long out of use, that it would be hopeless to attempt to revive it. Sanderson, in his beautiful sermon on the text, ‘When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up,’ puts the consideration, ‘why father and mother are named the *rathest*, and the rest to be included in them.’¹

I observed just now that words formed on certain patterns had a tendency to fall into disuse, and are evidently exposed to more than the ordinary chances of mortality. It has been thus with adjectives ending in ‘*some*,’ the Anglo-Saxon and early English ‘*sum*,’ the German ‘*sam*’ (‘*friedsam*,’ ‘*seltsam*’); and reappearing as an independent word in ‘*same*.’ It is true that of these many survive, as ‘*gladsome*,’ ‘*handsome*,’ ‘*wearisome*,’ ‘*buxom*’ (‘*bucksome*,’ in our earlier writers, the German ‘*beugsam*’ or ‘*biegsam*,’ bend-

¹ For other passages in which ‘*rathest*’ occurs see the *State Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 92, 170.

able, compliant); but of these far more than a rateable proportion are nearly or quite extinct. Thus 'wansum,' or sorrowful, is in the *Story of Genesis*; while in Wiclif's Bible you may note 'lovesum,' 'hatesum,' 'lustsum,' 'gilsum' (guilesome), 'wealsum,' 'heavysum,' 'lightsum,' 'delightsum;' of these 'lightsome' survived long, and indeed still survives in provincial dialects; but of the others all save 'delightsome' are gone; while that, although used in our Authorized Version (Mal. iii. 12), is now only employed in poetry. So too 'mightsome' (See Herbert Coleridge's *Glossarial Index*), 'willsome' (*Promptorium*), 'hearsome' (=obedient), 'needsome,' 'wantsome,' 'brightsome' (Marlowe), 'wieldsome,' 'unwieldsome' (Golding), 'unlightsome' (Milton), 'thoughtsome,' 'growthsome' (both in Fairfax), 'healthsome' (*Homilies*), 'poison-some' (Speght), 'ugsome,' 'ugglesome' (both in Foxe), 'laboursome' (Shakespeare), 'friendsome,' 'longsome' (Bacon), 'quietsome,' 'mirksome' (both in Spenser), 'toothsome' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'deepsome' (Chapman), 'gleesome,' 'joysome' (both in Browne's *Pastorals*), 'gaysome' (*Mirror for Magistrates*), 'likesome' (Holinshed), 'roomsome,' 'big-some,' 'awsome,' 'timersome,' 'winsome,' 'viewsome,' 'dosome' (= prosperous), 'flaysome' (= fearful), 'auntersome' (= adventurous), 'drearisome,' 'dulsome,' 'doubtsome,' 'doughtsome,' 'wranglesome,' 'clamorsome' (all these still surviving in the North), 'playsome' (employed by the historian Hume), 'lissome,' 'meltsome,' 'heedsome,' 'laughtsome,' 'clog-some,' 'fearsome,' 'limbersome,' 'chatsome' (= talkative, Kentish), 'ravisome' (= rapacious), 'fensome' (= adroit), 'gyversome' (= greedy, Durham), have

nearly or quite disappeared from our English speech. More of these have held their ground in Scotland than in the south of the Island.¹

Nor can it be mere accident that of a group of words, almost all of them depreciatory and contemptuous, ending in 'ard,' the German 'hart,' the Gothic 'hardus,'² more than one half should have dropped out of use; I refer to that group of which 'dotard,' 'laggard,' 'braggart,' 'sluggard,' 'buzzard,' 'bastard,' 'wizard,' may be taken as surviving specimens; while 'blinkard' (*Homilies*), 'dizzard' (Burton), 'dullard' (Udal), 'musard' (Chaucer), 'trichard' (*Political Songs*), 'haskard,' 'shreward' (Robert of Gloucester), 'ballard' (a bald-headed man, Wiclif); 'palliard,' 'pillard,' 'snivelard' (*Promptorium*); 'bosard,' 'puggard,' 'stinkard' (Ben Jonson), 'haggard' (a worthless hawk), are extinct.

There is a curious province of our vocabulary, in which we were once so rich, that extensive losses have failed to make us poor. I refer to those double words which either contain within themselves a strong rhyming modulation, such, for example, as 'willy-nilly,' 'hocus-pocus,' 'helter-skelter,' 'tag-rag,'

¹ Thus see in Jamieson's *Dictionary* 'bangsome,' 'freaksome,' 'drysome,' 'grousome,' with others out of number.

² This, though a German form, reached *us* through the French; having been early adopted by the Neo-latin languages. In Italian words of this formation are frequent, 'bugiardo,' 'falsardo,' 'leccardo,' 'testardo,' 'vecchiardo'; and certainly not less so in French: 'goliart,' 'pifart,' 'bavard,' 'fuyard,' with many more; and in these languages, no less than our own, they have almost always, as Diez observes (*Gram. d. Rom. Sprachen*, vol. ii. p. 359), 'eine ungünstige Bedeutung.' Compare Mätzner, vol. i. p. 439.

‘namby-pamby,’ ‘pell-mell,’ ‘hab-nab,’ ‘hodge-podge,’ ‘hugger-mugger,’ ‘hurly-burly,’¹ or, with a slight difference from this, those whose characteristic feature is not this internal likeness with initial unlikeness, but initial likeness with internal unlikeness; not rhyming, but strongly alliterative, and in every case with a change of the interior vowel from a weak into a strong, generally from ‘i’ into ‘a’ or ‘o’; as ‘shilly-shally,’ ‘mingle-mangle,’ ‘tittle-tattle,’ ‘prittle-prattle,’ ‘riff-raff,’ ‘see-saw,’ ‘slip-slop.’ No one who is not quite out of love with the homelier portions of the language, but will acknowledge the life and strength which there is often in these and in others still current among us. But of this sort what vast numbers have fallen out of use, some so fallen out of all remembrance that it may be difficult to find credence for them. Thus take of rhyming the following: ‘kaury-maury,’ ‘trolly-lolly’ (*Piers Ploughman*), ‘tuzzie-

¹ The same pleasure in a swiftly recurring rhyme has helped to form such phrases as these, ‘scot and lot,’ ‘top and lop,’ ‘creep and leap,’ ‘rape and scrape,’ ‘carry and harry,’ ‘draff and chaff,’ ‘shame and blame.’ Fairly numerous in English, there are far more of them in German; thus, ‘gut und blut,’ ‘lug und trug,’ ‘krieg und sieg,’ ‘steg und weg,’ ‘hülle und fülle,’ ‘hege und pflege,’ ‘saus und braus,’ ‘rath und that,’ ‘tritt und schritt,’ ‘schutz und trutz,’ ‘sack und pack,’ ‘fleiss und schweiss,’ ‘schlecht und recht,’ ‘weit und breit,’ ‘band und rand,’ ‘dach und fach,’ ‘sichten und richten,’ ‘handel und wandel,’ ‘schalten und walten,’ ‘leben und weben,’ ‘leben und streben.’ For some earlier and mainly juristic forms of the like kind see Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, p. 13. The same are common enough in Greek, as in the proverb, Παθήματα, μαθήματα: so too ῥεύματα and πνεύματα (Plato, *Rep.* iii. 405); κτήσις and χρήσις, κτήματα and χρήματα, ζῶη and πνοή (Acts xvii. 25), βρῶσις and πόσις (Col. ii. 16).

muzzie' (*Promptorium*), 'kicksy-wicksy' (Shakespeare); 'hibber-gibber,' 'rusty-dusty,' 'horrel-lorrel,' 'slaump-paump' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'royster-doyster' (*Old Play*), 'hoddy-doddy' (Ben Jonson); while of alliterative might be instanced these: 'skimble-skamble,' 'bibble-babble' (both in Shakespeare), 'twittle-twattle,' 'kim-kam' (both in Holland), 'trim-tram,' 'trish-trash,' 'swish-swash' (all in Gabriel Harvey), 'whim-wham' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'mizz-mazz' (Locke), 'snip-snap' (Pope), 'flim-flam' (Swift), 'tric-trac,' and others.¹

Again, there is a whole family of words,—many of them are now under ban,—which were at one time formed almost at pleasure, the only condition being that the combination should be a happy one. I refer to those singularly expressive words formed by a combination of verb and substantive, the former governing the latter; as 'telltale,' 'scapegrace,' 'turncoat,' 'turntail,' 'skinflint,' 'spendthrift,' 'spitfire,' 'lickspittle,' 'daredevil' (=wagehals), 'makebate' (=störenfried),

¹ *A Dictionary of Reduplicated Words in the English Language*, by Henry B. Wheatley, published as an appendix to *The Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1865, contains nearly six hundred of these words, and the collector believes that there are some hundreds more which he has not ingathered. I very much doubt whether he has left any such gleanings to those who follow him. I have lighted upon several, in what seemed to me out of the way corners of English literature, but have invariably found them duly registered by him. Words constructed on a similar scheme are to be found in the Romance languages; but are less numerous there, and not indigenous; their existence in these being rather the result of Germanic influences, which the Neolatin languages did not altogether escape (Diez, *Gram. d. Rom. Sprachen*, vol. i. p. 71).

‘marplot,’ ‘killjoy.’ These, with some others, have held their ground, and are current still; but how many are forgotten; while yet, though not always elegant, they preserved some of the most genuine and vigorous idioms of the language.¹ Nor is this strange; they are almost all words of abuse or contempt, and these are invariably among the most picturesque and imaginative which a language possesses. The whole man speaks out in them, and often the man under the influence of passion and excitement, which always lend force and fire to his speech. Let me of these recount a few: ‘smellfeast’ (Davies),—it may remind us of the Greek *τρεχέδειπνος*,—if not a better, is a more graphic, word than our foreign ‘parasite;’ ‘claw-back’ (Hacket) is stronger, if not more graceful, than ‘flatterer’ or ‘sycophant;’ ‘tossplot’ (Fuller), it is sometimes ‘reelpot’ (Middleton), or ‘swillpot’ (Cotgrave), tells its tale as well as ‘drunkard;’ and ‘pinchpenny’ (Holland), or ‘nipfarthing’ (Drant), as well or better than ‘miser.’ ‘Spintext,’ ‘lacklatin,’ ‘mumblematins,’ were all applied to ignorant clerics; ‘bitesheep’ (a favourite word with Foxe), to bishops who were rather wolves tearing, than shepherds feeding, the flock;

¹ Many languages have groups of words formed upon the same scheme, although, singularly enough, they are altogether absent from the Anglo-Saxon (Grimm, *Deutsche Gram.*, vol. ii. p. 976). Thus in Spanish a vaunting braggart is a ‘matamoros,’ a slaymoor; he is a ‘matasiete,’ a slayseven (the ‘ammazzasette’ of the Italians); a ‘perdonavidas,’ a sparelives. Others may be added to these, as ‘azotacalles,’ ‘picapleytos,’ ‘saltaparedes,’ ‘rompeesquinas,’ ‘ganapan,’ ‘cascatreguas.’ So in French, ‘attisefeu,’ ‘coupegorge,’ ‘fainéant,’ ‘vaurien,’ ‘trouble-fête.’ In Italian ‘accattapane,’ ‘cercabrighe,’ ‘rubacuori’ (Diez, *Gram. d. Rom. Sprachen*, vol. ii. p. 410).

‘slipstring’ (Beaumont and Fletcher, = pendar), ‘slipgibbet,’ ‘scapegallows,’ were all names given to those who, however they might have escaped the gallows, were justly owed to it, and might still, as our common people say, ‘go up stairs to bed.’

How many of these words occur in Shakespeare. The following list makes no pretence to completeness : ‘martext,’ ‘carrytale,’ ‘pleaseman,’ ‘sneakcup,’ ‘mumblenews,’ ‘wantwit,’ ‘lackbeard,’ ‘lackbrain,’ ‘lacklove,’ ‘ticklebrain,’ ‘cutpurse,’ ‘cutthroat,’ ‘crackhemp,’ ‘tearsheet,’ ‘breedbate,’ ‘swingebuckler,’ ‘pickpurse,’ ‘pickthank,’ ‘picklock,’ ‘scarecrow,’ ‘breakvow,’ ‘breakpromise,’ ‘findfault,’ ‘choplogic,’ ‘makepeace’—this last and ‘telltruth’ (Fuller) being the only two in the whole collection, wherein reprobation or contempt is not implied. Nor is the list exhausted yet ; there are further ‘dingthrift’ (= prodigal, Herrick), ‘wastegood,’ ‘spendall’ (both in Cotgrave), ‘stroygood’ (Golding), ‘scattergood,’ ‘wastethrift’ (Beaumont and Fletcher), ‘scapethrift,’ ‘swashbuckler’ (both in Holinshed), ‘rushbuckler,’ ‘shakebuckler,’ ‘rinsepitcher’ (both in Becon), ‘drawlatch’ (Awdeley), ‘crackrope’ (Howell), ‘waghalter,’ ‘wagfeather’ (both in Cotgrave), ‘blabtale’ (Hacket), ‘getnothing’ (Adams), ‘tearthroat’ (Gayton), ‘spitpoison’ (South), ‘spitvenom,’ ‘marprelate,’ ‘nipcheese,’ ‘nipscreed,’ ‘killman’ (Chapman), ‘lackland,’ ‘pickquarrel,’ ‘pickfault,’ ‘pickpenny’ (Henry More), ‘makefray’ (Bishop Hall), ‘makedebate’ (Richardson’s *Letters*), ‘quenchcoal’ (an enemy to all zeal in religion, Rogers), ‘kindlecoal,’ ‘kindlefire’ (both in Gurnall), ‘turntippet’ (Cranmer), ‘slipstring,’ ‘turnback,’ ‘swillbowl’ (Stubbs), ‘blurpaper’ (= scribbler, Florio), ‘smell-

smock' (=mulierarius), 'cumberworld' (Drayton), 'curryfavor,' 'pinchfist,' 'suckfist,' 'hatepeace' (Sylvester), 'hategood' (Bunyan), 'clusterfist' (Cotgrave), 'clutchfist,' 'sharkgull' (both in Middleton), 'make-sport' (Fuller), 'hangdog' ('Herod's *hangdogs* in the tapestry,' Pope), 'catchpoll,' 'makeshift' (used not of things, as now), 'killcow' (these two last in Gabriel Harvey), 'frayboggard' (= scarecrow, Coverdale), 'letgame' (=spoilsport, Chaucer), 'rakeshame' (Milton, prose), with others which it will be convenient to omit. 'Rakehell,' which used to be spelt 'rakel' or 'rakle' (Chaucer), a good English word, would be wrongly included in this list, although Cowper, when he writes 'rakehell' ('*rake-hell* baronet'),¹ must evidently have regarded it as belonging to this family of words.²

There is another frequent cause of the disuse of words. In some inexplicable way there comes to be

¹ I regret by too much brevity to have here led astray Dr. G. Schneider, who has written a *History of the English Language*, Freiburg, 1863, and done me the honour to transfer with very slight acknowledgment whatever he found useful in my little book to his own. He has at p. 159, this wonderful paragraph: 'Rakehell bedeutete ehemals baronet; bald verband sich damit der Begriff von "wohllebender Mensch;" und da derjenige, welcher mehr an's Wohlleben denkt, leicht ein Wohllüstling wird, ging die anfangs gute Bedeutung in diese letztere über; der Ausdruck ward desshalb aufgegeben, um nicht mit dem Gedanken an baronet stets die Idee von einem ausschweifenden wohllüstigen Menschen zu verbinden.'

² The mistake is far earlier; long before Cowper wrote the sound suggested first this sense, and then this spelling. Thus Stanihurst, *Description of Ireland*, p. 28: 'They are taken for no better than *rakehels*, or *devil's black guard*;' and often elsewhere.

attached something of ludicrous, or coarse, or vulgar to them, out of a sense of which they are no longer used in earnest writing, and fall out of the discourse of those who desire to speak elegantly. Not indeed that this degradation which overtakes certain words is in all cases inexplicable. The unheroic character of most men's minds, with their consequent intolerance of that heroic which they cannot understand, is constantly at work, too often with success, in taking down words of nobleness from their high pitch; and, as the most effectual way of doing this, in casting an air of mock-heroic about them. Thus 'to dub,' a word resting on one of the noblest usages of chivalry, has now something of ludicrous about it; so too has 'doughty.' They belong to that serio-comic, mock-heroic diction, the multiplication of which, as of all parodies on greatness, is evermore a sign of evil augury for a nation that receives it with favour, is at present such a sign of evil augury for our own.

'Pate' is now comic or ignoble; it was not so once; else we should not meet it in the Psalms (vii. 17); as little was 'noddle,' which occurs in one of the few poetical passages in Hawes. The same may be affirmed of 'sconce,' of 'nowl' or 'noll' (Wiclif); of 'slops' for trousers (Marlowe's *Lucan*); of 'cocksure' (Rogers), of 'smug,' which once meant adorned ('the *smug* bridegroom,' Shakespeare). 'To nap' is now a word without dignity; while in Wiclif's Bible we read, 'Lo He schall not *nappe*, nether slepe that kepeth Israel' (Ps. cxxi. 4). 'To punch,' 'to thump,' both occurring in Spenser, could not now obtain the same serious use; as little 'to wag.' (Matt. xxvii. 39), or 'to buss' (Shakespeare). Neither would

any one now say with Wiclif that at Lystra Barnabas and Paul 'rent their clothes and *skipped out* among the people' (Acts xiv. 14); nor with Coverdale, 'My beloved cometh *hopping* upon the mountains' (Cant. ii. 8); nor yet that 'the Lord *trounced* Sisera and all his host,' as it stands in the Bible of 1551; nor with the Geneva characterize some as 'detestable fellows' (2 Pet. ii. 14). 'A *sight* of angels' (as Tyndale has it at Heb. xii. 22), would be felt to be a vulgarism now. 'A *blubbered* face' (Spenser) would scarcely appeal to our pity. We should not call now a delusion of Satan a '*flam* of the devil' (Henry More); nor our Lord's course through the air to the pinnacle of the temple 'his aery *jaunt*' (Milton). 'Verdant' is no longer a name which Spenser could give to one of the knights of Fairyland. It is the same with phrases. 'Through thick and thin' (Spenser), 'cheek by jowl' (Sylvester), 'hand over head' (Bacon), do not now belong to serious literature. In the glorious ballad of *Chevy Chase*, a noble warrior whose legs are hewn off, is 'in doleful dumps;' just as, in Holland's *Livy*, the Romans are 'in the dumps' after their defeat at Cannæ. In Golding's *Ovid*, one fears that he will 'go to pot.' In one of the beautiful letters of John Careless, preserved in Foxe's *Martyrs*, he announces that a persecutor, who expects a recantation from him, is 'in the wrong box.' And in the sermons of Barrow, who certainly did not affect familiar, still less vulgar, expressions, we constantly meet such terms as 'to rate,' 'to snub,' 'to gull,' 'to pudder' (that is, to bother), 'dumpish,' and the like; words, we may be sure, not vulgar when he used them.

Then too the advance of refinement causes words

to be dismissed, which are felt to speak too plainly. It is not here merely that one age has more delicate ears than another ; and that matters are freely spoken of at one period which at another are withdrawn from conversation. There is something of this ; but even if this delicacy were at a standstill, there would still be a continual disallowing of words, which for a certain while have been employed to designate coarse or disagreeable facts or things ; or, where not a disallowing, a relinquishing of them to the lower classes of society, with the adoption of others in their stead. The former words being felt to have come by long use into too direct and close relation with what they designate, to summon it up too distinctly before the mind's eye, they are thereupon exchanged for others, which, at first at least, indicate more lightly and allusively the offensive thing, rather hint and suggest than designate and describe it : although by and by these new will in their turn be discarded, and for exactly the same reasons which brought about the dismissal of those which they themselves superseded. It lies in the necessity of things that I must leave this part of my subject, curious as it is, without illustration ;¹ but no one even moderately acquainted with the early literature of the Reformation can be ignorant

¹ As not, however, turning on a *very* coarse matter, and illustrating the subject with infinite wit and humour, I might refer the Spanish scholar to the discussion between Don Quixote and his squire on the dismissal of 'regoldar' from the language of good society, and the substitution of 'erutar' in its room (*Don Quixote*, 4. 7. 43). In a letter of Cicero to Pætus (*Fam.* ix. 22) there is a subtle and interesting disquisition on the philosophy of these forbidden words.

of words having free course therein, which now are not merely coarse, and as such under ban, but which no one would employ who did not mean to speak impurely and vilely.¹

I spoke in a former lecture of the many words which have come back to us after a temporary absence, and of the extent to which the language has been reinforced and recruited by these. For there is this difference between words and flexions, that of the last what is once gone is gone for ever ; they are irrevocable ; no human power could ever recall them. A poet indeed may use 'pictai' for 'pictæ' 'olli' for 'illi' (Virgil), or 'glitterand' for glittering (Spenser) ; but it is not in their power to call these back, even if they would ; and when a German writer suggests that to abate the too great sibilation of our language we should recover the plurals in 'n,' 'eyne,' 'housen,' 'hosen,' and the like, he betrays his ignorance of the inexorable laws of language, and of the impossibility of controlling or modifying these. But it is not so with words ; and I cannot but think, in view of this disposition of theirs to return, in view also of the havoc which, as we have seen, various causes are evermore effecting in the ranks of a language, that much might be done by writers of authority and influence in the way of bringing back deserters, where they are capable of yielding good service still, and placing them in the ranks again ; still more in that of detaining words, which, finding no honourable employment, seem more or less disposed to be gone, though

¹ See Grimm (*Wörterbuch*, s. v. *Koth*) for some good remarks on this matter.

they have not as yet actually disappeared. This would be less difficult from the fact that in almost every instance these words, obsolete or obsolescent, which our literary English knows, or is about to know, no more, live on, as has been already noted, in one or more of our provincial dialects; they require not therefore, as dead, that life should be breathed into them anew; but only, as having retired into obscurity for a while, that some one draw them forth from this obscurity again. Of these there are multitudes. If I instance a very few, it is not as specially recommending them for rehabilitation, though some of them are well worthy of it, and capable of good service still; but as showing to what kind of work I invite.

It is indeed to the poet that mainly, although not exclusively, this task must be committed. 'That high-flying liberty of conceit' which is proper to him will justify liberties on his part which would be denied to the writer of less impassioned prose.¹ It

¹ Jean Paul (*Æsthetik*, § 83): Ueberhaupt bildet und nährt die Prose ihre Sprachkraft an der Poesie, denn diese muss immer mit neuen Federn steigen, wenn die alten, die ihren Flügeln ausfallen, die Prose zum Schreiben nimmt. Wie diese aus Dichtkunst entstand, so wächst sie auch an ihr.

Ewald (*Die poet. Bücher des Alten Bundes*, p. 55): Endlich aber ist der Dichter nicht bloss so der freieste Herrscher und Schöpfer im Gebiete der Sprache seiner Zeit, er spricht auch am wärmsten und frischesten aus der Zeit und dem Orte, woran seine Empfindungen zunächst geknüpft sind; seine Sprache ist bei aller Würde und Höhe zugleich die heimischste und eigenthümlichste, weil sie am reinsten und anspruchlosesten aus dem ganzen menschlichen Sein des Einzelnen fliesst. Der Dichter kann also freier und leichter abweichende Farben und Stoffe der Sprache seiner nächsten Heimath und seiner eigenen Zeit einfließen lassen, und während die Prosa eine einmal

is felt by all that with the task which is before him, he has a right to all the assistances which the language strained to the uttermost is capable of yielding. This liberty Tennyson has used. Thus 'to burgeon' had well-nigh disappeared from the language since the time of Dryden, but has by him on two occasions at least been employed. 'Holts,' too, for wooded hills, has been recovered by him. Yet it is not to the poet only that such a privilege is conceded. The verb 'to hearten' was as good as dead till Mr. Grote, by his frequent employment of it in his *History of Greece*, gave it life again. But how much more in this line of things might be accomplished than has actually been done. 'To sagg,' a Shakespearian word, and one far too good to lose, is alive almost everywhere in England, except in our literary dialect; thus a tired horse 'saggs' his head; an ill-hung gate 'saggs' on its hinges. 'To gaster' and 'to flayte,'—they are synonyms, but the first is rather to terrify, and the second to scare,—are frequent in the Puritan writers of East Anglia; so is 'to fellow-feel;' the two former being still alive upon the lips of the people. Perhaps 'to fleck' is not gone; nor yet 'to shimmer;' but both are certainly in danger of going. Coleridge supposed that he had invented 'aloofness;' it is well worthy of acceptance; but if it has been accepted,

festgewordene Form schwer ändert, bereichert und verjüngt sich die Dichtersprache beständig durch Aufnahme des Dialectischen, welches in die herrschende Prosa nicht übergegangen, und durch den Eindrang von Stoffen der Volkssprache, welche doch immer mannigfältiger ist, weil die unerschöpfliche Quelle lebendiger Sprache auch unvermerkt sich immer verändert und fortbildet. Compare Goethe, *Werke*, 1836, vol. v. p. 68.

which is not yet perfectly clear, he only revived a word which was in use two hundred years ago. 'Well-willer' 'ill-willer,' both frequent in North's *Plutarch*, are good and unpretending words. 'Litherness,' as expressing a want of moral backbone in the character, has gone without leaving a substitute behind it. 'Elfish' and 'Elfishness,' expressing a certain inborn and mischievous waywardness, have done the same.¹

'Damish' (Rogers) applied in blame to proud imperious women, 'wearish' in the sense of small, weak, shrunken (thus, 'a wearish old man,' Burton), 'masterous' or 'maistrous' as Milton spells it, in that of overbearing, 'kittle,' an epithet given to persons of a certain delicate organization, and thus touchy and easily offended, 'birdwitted,' or incapable of keeping the attention fixed for long on any single point (Bacon), 'afterwitted,' applied by Tyndale to one having what the French call *l'esprit de l'escalier*, who always remembers what he should have said, when, having left the room, it is too late to say it, with numberless others, may each of them singly be no serious loss, but when these losses may be counted by hundreds and thousands, they are no slight impoverishment of our vocabulary; and assuredly it would not be impossible to win some of these back again. There are others, such as Baxter's 'wordwarriors,' strivers, that is, about words, as 'hopelosts,' very nearly corresponding to the Greek *ἄστωτοι*, as 'bookhunger' (Lord

¹ Thus Chaucer:

'He seemeth *elvisch* by his countenance,
For unto no wight doth he daliaunce.'

Prioress's Tale.

Brooke), as 'little-ease,' a place, that is, of painful restraint, as 'realmrape' (= usurpation, *Mirror for Magistrates*), as 'to witwanton' (Fuller warns men that they do not 'witwanton with God'), 'to cankerfret' ('sin cankerfrets the soul,' Rogers), which, though never popular, seem to me happier than that they should be allowed to die.

We have to thank the American branch of the English-speaking race that we have not lost 'freshet' (an exquisite word used by Milton), 'snag,' 'bluff,' 'kedge,' 'slick,'¹ 'to whittle,' 'to cave in,' 'to prink,' 'to rile,' 'to snarl' (= to entangle). They are often counted as American inventions, but are indeed nothing of the kind. There is scarcely one of them, of which examples could not be found in our earlier literature, and in provincial dialects they are current every one to this present day.² Even 'the fall' as equivalent to the autumn is not properly American; being as old as Dryden,³ and older.

¹ 'Slick' is indeed only another form of 'sleek.' Thus Fuller (*Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, vol. ii. p. 190): 'Sure I am this city [the New Jerusalem] as presented by the prophet, was fairer, finer, *slicker*, smoother, more exact, than any fabric the earth afforded.'

² See Nall, *Dialect and Provincialisms of East Anglia*, s. vv.

³ 'What crowds of patients the town-doctor kills,
Or how last *fall* he raised the weekly bills.'

So in the answer to Marlowe's *Passionate Pilgrim*, ascribed to Raleigh:

'A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's *spring*, but sorrow's *fall*.'

On this matter of American-English compare a very interesting paper, with the title, 'Inroads upon English,' in *Blackwood's Magazine*, Oct. 1867, p. 399, sqq.

But besides these deserters, of which some at least might with great advantage be recalled to the ranks, there are other words, which have never found a place in our literary English, that yet might be profitably adopted into it. A time arrives for a language, when, apart from the recoveries I have been speaking of just now, its own local and provincial dialects are almost the only source from which it can derive additions, such as shall really constitute an increase of its wealth ; while yet such additions from one quarter or another are most needful, if it is not daily to grow poorer, if it is to find any compensations for the waste which is evermore going forward of the wealth that in time past it possessed. We have seen how words wear out, become unserviceable, how the glory that clothed them once disappears, as the light fades from the hills ; how they drop away from the stock and stem of the language, as dead leaves from their parent tree ; so that others, a later growth, must supply their place, if the foliage is not to grow sparser and thinner every day.

Before, however, we turn to the dialects with any lively expectation of obtaining effectual help from thence, we must form a juster estimate of what these really are, than is commonly entertained ; they must be redeemed in our minds from that unmerited contempt and neglect with which they are by too many regarded. We too often think of a dialect, as of a degraded, distorted, and vulgarized form of the classical language ; all its departures from this being for us violations of grammar, or wrongs which in one kind or another it has suffered from the uneducated and illiterate by whom mainly it is employed. But it is nothing of the kind. It may not have our grammar,

but it has a grammar of its own. If it have here and there a distorted or mutilated word, much oftener what we esteem such embodies some curious fact in the earlier history of the language. A dialect is one of the many forms in which a language once existed ; but one, as an eminent French writer has expressed it, which has had misfortunes ;¹ or which at any rate has not had the good fortune that befell High-German in Germany, Castilian in Spain, Tuscan in Italy, that namely of being elevated above its compeers and competitors to the dignity of the classical language of the land. As a consequence it will not have received the development, nor undergone the elaboration, which

¹ Sainte-Beuve: Je définis un patois, une ancienne langue qui a eu des malheurs. Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 93): Les faits de langue abondent dans les patois. Parce qu'ils offrent parfois un mot de la langue littéraire estropié ou quelque perversion manifeste de la syntaxe régulière, on a été porté à conclure que le reste est à l'avenant, et qu'ils sont, non pas une formation indépendante et originale, mais une corruption de l'idiome cultivé qui, tombé en des bouches mal apprises, y subit tous les supplices de la distorsion. Il n'en est rien ; quand on ôte ces taches peu nombreuses et peu profondes, on trouve un noyau sain et entier. Ce serait se faire une idée erronée que de considérer un patois comme du français altéré ; il n'y a eu aucun moment où ce que nous appelons aujourd'hui le français ait été uniformément parlé sur toute la surface de la France ; et, par conséquent, il n'y a pas eu de moment non plus où il ait pu s'altérer chez les paysans et le peuple des villes pour devenir un patois. Elsewhere the same writer says (vol. ii. p. 150): Sauf l'usage des bons écrivains et de la société polie, sauf l'élaboration grammaticale (double avantage que je suis loin de vouloir atténuer), la langue littéraire n'est, non plus, qu'un patois ou dialecte élevé à la suprématie, et elle a, comme les autres, ses fautes et ses méprises.

have been the portion of its more successful rival ; but for these very reasons will have often retained a freedom, a freshness, and a *naïveté* which the other has in good measure foregone and lost.¹

Of its words, idioms, turns of speech, many which we are ready to set down as vulgarisms, solecisms of speech, violations of the primary rules of grammar, do no more than attest that those who employ them have from some cause or another not kept abreast with the advances which the language has made. The usages are only local in the fact that, having once been em-

¹ Littré (*Hist. de la Langue Française*, vol. ii. p. 130) : Un patois n'a pas d'écrivains qui le fixent, dans le sens où l'on dit que les bons auteurs fixent une langue ; un patois n'a pas les termes de haute poésie, de haute éloquence, de haut style, vu qu'il est placé sur un plan où les sujets qui comportent tout cela ne lui appartiennent plus. C'est ce qui lui donne une apparence de familiarité naïve, de simplicité narquoise, de rudesse grossière, de grâce rustique. Mais, sous cette apparence, qui provient de sa condition même, est un fonds solide de bon et vieux français qu'il faut toujours consulter. Compare Ampère, *La Formation de la Langue Française*, p. 381 ; and Schleicher (*Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 110) : Die Mundarten nun sind die natürlichen, nach den Gesetzen der sprachgeschichtlichen Veränderungen gewordenen Formen der deutschen Sprache, im Gegensatze zu der mehr oder minder gemachten und schulmeisterisch geregelten und zugestutzten Sprache der Schrift. Schon hieraus folgt der hohe Werth derselben für die wissenschaftliche Erforschung unserer Sprache ; hier ist eine reiche Fülle von Worten und Formen, die, an sich gut und echt, von der Schriftsprache verschmäht würden ; hier finden wir manches, was wir zur Erklärung der älteren Sprachdenkmale, ja zur Erkenntniss der jetzigen Schriftsprache verwerthen können, abgesehen von dem sprachgeschichtlichen, dem lautphysiologischen Interesse, welches die überaus reiche Mannigfaltigkeit unserer Mundarten bietet.

ployed everywhere and by all, they have now receded from the lips of all except those in some certain country districts, who have been more faithful than others to the traditions of the past. Thus there are districts of England where for 'we sing,' 'ye sing,' 'they sing,' they decline their plurals, 'we singen,' 'ye singen,' 'they singen.' This was not indeed the original plural, but was that form of it which, coming up about Chaucer's time, was dying out in Spenser's. He indeed constantly employs it,¹ but after him it becomes

¹ It must be owned that Spenser does not fairly represent the language of his time, or indeed of any time, affecting as he does a certain artificial archaism both of words and forms; and this unfortunately with no sufficient knowledge of the past history of the language to prevent him from falling into various mistakes. Some call in question the justice of this charge, and will fain have it that he does but write the oldest English of his time. I cannot so regard it. Jonson, born only twenty years later, could not have been mistaken; and with all its severity there is a truth in his observation, 'Spenser, in affecting the ancients, writ no language.' And Daniel, born some ten years later, implicitly repeats the charge:

'Let others sing of knights and Paladins
In *aged* accents and *untimely* words.'

See too the remarkable Epistle prefixed by the anonymous Editor to his *Shepherd's Calendar*, where the writer glories in the archaic character of the author, on whom he is annotating. In the matter, however, which is treated above, Ben Jonson was at one with him, himself expressing a strong regret that these flexions had not been retained. 'The persons plural,' he says (*English Grammar*, c. xvii.), 'keep the termination of the first person singular. In former times till about the reign of King Henry VIII., they were wont to be formed by adding *en*; thus *loven*, *sayen*, *complainen*. But now (whatsoever is the cause) it hath quite grown out of use, and that other so generally prevailed, that I

ever rarer in our literary English. In the *Homilies* I have met it once, in Drayton,¹ and even so late as in Fuller ; but in his time it quite disappears.

Now of those who retain such forms you should esteem not that they violate the laws of the language, but that they have taken their *permanent* stand at that which was only a point of transition for it, and which it has now left behind. A countryman will nowadays say, 'He made me *afeard*,' or 'The price of corn *ris* last market-day,' or 'I will *axe* him his name ;' or 'I tell *ye*,' and you will be tempted to set these phrases down as barbarous English. They are not such at all. 'Afeard' is the regular participle of an old English verb 'a-færan,' as 'afraid' of 'to affray ;' 'ris' or 'risse' is an old preterite of 'to rise ;' 'to axe' is not a mispronunciation of 'to ask,' but the constant form which in earlier English the verb assumed. Even such a phrase as 'Put *them* things away,' is not bad, but only antiquated English.² 'Ourn,' which our rustics

dare not presume to set this afoot again ; albeit (to tell you my opinion) I am persuaded that the lack hereof, well considered, will be found a great blemish to our tongue. For seeing *time* and *person* be as it were the right and left hand of a verb, what can the maiming bring else, but a lameness to the whole body ?'

¹ 'The happy shepherds *minsen* on the plain.'

² Génin (*Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. p. 71) says to the same effect : Il n'y a guères de faute de français, je dis faute générale, accréditée, qui n'ait sa raison d'être, et ne pût au besoin produire ses lettres de noblesse ; et souvent mieux en règle que celles des locutions qui ont usurpé leur place au soleil. The French Academy, in the Preface to the last edition of the *Dictionnaire Historique de la Langue Française*, p. xv., warns against similar acts of injustice, into which, trying the past by the rules of the present, we are in danger of falling : Ces écrivains y seront

in the South of England so freely employ (cf. Gen. xxvi. 20, Wiclif, and often), has been disallowed by those classes with which rests the final decision as to what shall stand in a language, and what shall not; but it is in itself as correct, it would hardly be too much to say, more correct than 'ours.' 'Hern' too for 'hers' is frequent in Wiclif. You are not indeed therefore to conclude that these forms are open to you to employ, or that they would be good English now. They would not; being departures from that present use and custom, which must constitute our standard in what we speak and write; just as in our buying and selling we must use the current coin of the realm, not attempt to pass that which long since has been called in, whatever intrinsic value it may possess.

The same may be said of certain ways of pronouncing words, not now in use, except among the lower classes; thus, 'contráry,' 'mischíévous,' 'blasphémous,' instead of 'cóntrary,' 'míschievous,' 'blásphemous.' It would be easy to show by quotations from our poets that these are no mispronunciations, but only the retention of an earlier pronunciation by the people, after

quelquefois défendus contre d'indiscrètes critiques, qui leur ont reproché comme des fautes de langage ce qui n'était que l'emploi légitime de la langue de leur temps. A chaque époque s'établissent des habitudes, des conventions, des règles même, auxquelles n'ont pu assurément se conformer par avance les écrivains des époques antérieures, et qu'il n'est ni juste ni raisonnable de leur opposer, comme s'il s'agissait de ces premiers principes dont l'autorité est absolue et universelle. C'est pourtant en vertu de cette jurisprudence rétroactive qu'ont été condamnées, chez d'excellents auteurs, des manières de parler alors admises, et auxquelles un long abandon n'a pas toujours enlevé ce qu'elles avaient de grâce et de vivacité.

the higher classes have abandoned it.¹ And let me here say how well worth your while it will prove to watch for provincial words and inflections, local idioms and modes of pronunciation. Count nothing in this kind beneath your notice. Do not at once ascribe any departure from what you have been used to, either in grammar, or pronunciation, or meaning ascribed to words, to the ignorance or stupidity of the speaker. If you hear 'nuncheon,'² do not at once

¹ A single proof may in each case suffice :

'Our wills and fates do so *contrary* run.'—*Shakespeare*.

'Ne let *mischiévous* witches with their charms.'—*Spenser*.

'O argument *blasphémous*, false and proud.'—*Milton*.

² This form, which our country people in Hampshire always employ, either retains the original pronunciation, our received one being a modern corruption ; or else, as is more probable, *we* have confounded two different words, from which confusion they have kept clear. In Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, and in Cotgrave's *French and English Dictionary*, both words occur : 'nuncion or nuncheon, the afternoon's repast,' (cf. *Hudibras*, i. 1, 346 : 'They took their breakfasts or their *nuncheons*'), and 'lunchion, a big piece,' *i.e.* of bread ; both giving 'caribot,' which has this meaning, as the French equivalent ; and compare Gay :

'When hungry thou stood'st staring like an oaf,

I sliced the *luncheon* from the barley loaf ;'

and Miss Baker (*Northamptonshire Glossary*) explains 'lunch' as 'a large lump of bread, or other edible ; "He helped himself to a good *lunch* of cake."' This 'nuntion' may possibly help us to the secret of the word. Richardson notes that it is spelt 'noon-shun' in Browne's *Pastorals*, which must suggest as plausible, if nothing more, that the 'nuntion' was originally the labourer's slight meal, to which he withdrew for the *shunning* of the heat of *noon* : above all when in Lancashire we find 'noon-scape,' and in Norfolk 'noon-miss,' for the time when labourers rest after dinner. The dignity at which 'lunch' or

set it down for a malformation of 'luncheon,' nor 'yeel'¹ of 'eel.' Lists and collections of provincial usage, such as I have suggested, always have their value. If you cannot turn them to profit yourselves, and they may not stand in close enough connection with your own studies for this, there are always those who will thank you for them; and to whom the humblest of these collections, carefully and conscientiously made, will be in one way or other of real assistance.² There is the more need to urge this at the present, because, notwithstanding the tenacity with which our country folk cling to their old forms and uses, still these must now be rapidly growing fewer; and there are forces, moral and material, at work in England, which will probably cause that of those which now survive the greater part will within the next fifty years have disappeared. Many of them even now are only to be gleaned from such scattered and remote villages as have not yet been reached by the ravages of the schoolmaster, or the inroads of the railway.

What has been just now said of our provincial

'luncheon' has now arrived, as when we read in the newspapers of a 'magnificent *luncheon*,' is quite modern; the word belonged a century ago to rustic life, and in literature had not travelled beyond the 'hobnailed pastorals' which professed to describe that life.

¹ Holland (*Pliny*, vol. ii. p. 428, and often) writes it so; and see on this initial 'y,' Barnes, *Dorsetshire Poems*, passim.

² An article *On English Pronouns Personal* in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. i. p. 277, will attest the excellent service which an accurate acquaintance with provincial usages may render in the investigation of perplexing phenomena in English grammar. Compare Guest, *Hist. of English Rhythms*, vol. ii. p. 207.

English, namely, that it is often *old* English rather than *bad* English, is not less true of many so-called Americanisms.¹ There are parts of America where 'het' is still the participle of 'to heat ;' if our Authorized Version had not been meddled with, we should so read it at Dan. iii. 19 to this day ; where 'holp' still survives as the perfect of 'to help ;' 'pled' (as in Spenser) of 'to plead.' Longfellow uses 'dove' as the perfect of 'to dive ;' nor is this a poetical license, for I lately met the same in a well-written book of American prose.

The dialects then are worthy of respectful attention—and if in their grammar, so in their vocabulary no less. If the sage or the scholar were required to invent a word which should designate the slight meal claimed in some of our southern counties by the labourer before he begins his mowing in the early morning, they might be sorely perplexed to do it. The Dorsetshire labourer, who demands his 'dew-bit,' has solved the difficulty. In the same dialect they express in a single word that a house has a northern aspect ; it is 'backsunned.' You have marked the lighting of the sky between the horizon and the clouds when these last are about to break up and disappear. Whatever name you gave it you would hardly improve on that of the 'weather-gleam,' which in some of our dialects it bears. I had long supposed that 'chair-days,' the beautiful name for those days of old age when outward activity has ceased, was Shakespeare's own invention ; occurring as it does in young Clifford's pathetic lament for

See Bartlett, *Dictionary of Americanisms*, passim.

his slain father.¹ But this is a mistake ; in Lancashire the phrase is current still. And this is what we find continually, namely, that the true art of word-making, which is hidden from the wise and learned of this world, is revealed to the husbandman, the mechanic, the child. Spoken as the dialects are by the actual cultivators of the soil, they will often be inconceivably rich in words having to do with the processes of husbandry ; thus ripe corn blown about by strong winds, or beaten down by rain or hail, may in East Anglia be said either to be ‘baffled,’ or ‘nickled,’ or ‘snaffled,’ or ‘shuckled,’ or ‘wilted,’² each of these words having its own shade of meaning. When thoroughly soaked and spoiled by wet, it is said to be ‘waterslain.’ Spoken by those who are in constant and close contact with external nature, the dialects will often possess a far richer and more varied nomenclature to set forth the various and changing features of this than the literary language itself. Max Müller, in a passage of singular eloquence on the subject of ‘dialectical regeneration,’³ claims the dialects as the true feeders of a language : ‘We can hardly form an idea of the unbounded resources of dialects. When literary languages have stereotyped one general term, their dialects will supply fifty, each with its own special shade of meaning. If new combinations of thought are evolved in the progress of society, dialects will readily supply the required names

¹ 2 *Henry VI.*, Act v. Sc. 2.

² See Nall, *Dialect of East Anglia*, s. vv. ‘To wilt,’ provincial with us, is not so in America (Marsh, *Lectures*, 1860, p. 668).

³ *On the Science of Language*, 1st part, p. 60.

from the store of their so-called superfluous words.' ¹ Thus a brook, a streamlet, a rivulet are all very well, but what discriminating power do they possess as compared with a 'beck,' a 'burn,' a 'gill,' a 'force,' North-country words, with each a special signification of its own?

Words from the local dialects are continually slipping into the land's language. 'Pony,' a Gaelic word, has slipped into it during the last century; 'gruesome,' which has always lived in Scotland, is creeping back into English; it is used by Browning; and with it not a few other words from the same quarter, as 'blink,' 'canny,' 'daft,' 'douce,' 'dour,' 'eerie,' 'fash,' 'feckless,' 'foregather,' 'glamour,' 'glint,' 'gloaming,'

¹ Compare Heyse, *System der Sprachwissenschaft*, p. 229; and Gérusez, who in his admirable *Hist. de la Littérature Française*, vol. i. p. 19, has said on this matter: Ce recrutement nécessaire doit s'opérer non par voie d'invasion tumultueuse ou de capricieuse création. Il y a plusieurs moyens d'y pourvoir régulièrement: c'est d'abord la reprise des mots et des tournures qui ont été délaissés par inadvertence ou juste dédain. En effet chez nos vieux auteurs qui ont été des maîtres et qui ne sont plus des modèles, il y a bien des richesses enfouies qui ne demandent qu'à reparaître. Les langues anciennes, mères de la nôtre, peuvent encore lui fournir quelques aliments. Nous pouvons aussi, avec de grandes précautions toutefois, faire d'heureux emprunts à nos voisins. Mais la source la plus saine et la plus abondante, la vraie fontaine de Jouvence pour la langue littéraire, c'est la langue populaire, qui fermente toujours; ce sont les dialectes spéciaux des arts, des métiers, des jeux même où les mots naissent spontanément des mouvements et des besoins de la pensée et reçoivent une empreinte vivante de la vie même de l'intelligence. Ceux-là seuls sont de bonne venue et destinés à vivre. Les mots qu'on forge dans le cabinet manquent de grâce et durent peu.

‘glower,’ ‘skirl,’ ‘uncanny,’ ‘winsome,’ all excellent in their kind. Wordsworth has given allowance to ‘force,’ the North-country name for a waterfall; and, if my memory do not err, to ‘beck,’ and ‘burn’ as well.¹ ‘Clever’ is an excellent example of a low-born word which almost without observation has passed into general allowance; though meaning one thing in our provincial dialects, another in America (see Webster), and another in our standard English. Sir Thomas Browne noted it two centuries ago as an East Anglian provincialism, and Ray as dialectic. Johnson protests against it as ‘a low word, scarcely ever used but in burlesque or conversation.’ The facts of the case do not quite bear this statement out, but there can be no doubt that it is a *parvenu*, which has little by little been struggling up to the position which it has now obtained. ‘Fun’ too, of which our earlier

¹ What use Luther made of the popular language in his translation of the Bible he has himself told us, and here is one secret of its epoch-marking character. These are his words: ‘Man muss nicht die Buchstaben in der lateinischen Sprache fragen, wie man soll deutsche reden; sondern man muss die Mutter im Hause, die Kinder auf den Gassen, den gemeinen Mann auf dem Markte darum fragen, und denselben auf das Maul sehen, wie sie reden.’ What a real acquisition the verb ‘klirren’ is in German. It is a provincial word which first found its way into a written book in 1738, and not into the German Dictionaries till a good deal later (see Grimm, s.v.). Montaigne, who owes not a little of his reputation to his wonderful style, pleads guilty to the charge brought in his lifetime against him, that he employed not a few words and idioms which, till he gave them a wider circulation, belonged to his native Gascony alone. Goethe too has obtained general allowance for words not a few, which were only provincial before him.

Dictionaries know nothing, was 'a low cant word' in Johnson's time and in his estimation.

So much has been done in this matter, the language has been so largely reinforced, so manifestly enriched by words which either it has received back after a longer or shorter absence, or which in later days it has derived from the dialects and enlisted for the first time, as to afford abundant encouragement for attempting much more in the same direction.¹ But these suggestions must for the present suffice. I reserve for my lecture which follows the other half of a subject which is very far from being half exhausted.

¹ Nisard (*Curiosités de l'Etymol. Franç.* p. 90): Les patois sont à la fois l'asile où s'est réfugiée en partie l'ancienne langue française, et le dépôt où se gardent les éléments de la nouvelle.

LECTURE VI.

DIMINUTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

(CONTINUED.)

WHAT in my last preceding lecture has been said must suffice in respect of the words, and the character of the words, which we have lost or let go. Of these, indeed, if a language, as it travels onwards, loses some, it also acquires others, and probably many more than it loses ; they are leaves on the tree of language, of which, if some wither and fall away, a new succession takes their place. But it is not so, as I already observed, with the *forms* or *powers* of a language, that is, with the various inflections, moods, duplicate or triplicate formation of tenses, and the like. Not a few of these the speakers of a language come gradually to perceive that they can do without, and therefore cease to employ ; seeking to suppress grammatical intricacies, and to obtain grammatical simplicity and, so far as possible, a pervading uniformity, sometimes even at the cost of letting go what had real worth, and contributed to the more lively, if not to the clearer, setting forth of the inner thought or feeling of the mind.¹ Here there is only

¹ It has been well said, ‘There is nothing more certain than this, that the earlier we can trace back any one language, the

loss, with no compensating gain ; or, at all events, diminution only, and never addition. In this region no productive energy is at work during the later periods of a language, during any, indeed, but quite the earliest, and such as are withdrawn from our vision altogether. These are not as the leaves, of which a new succession takes the place of the old ; but may be likened to the leading branches of a tree, whose shape, mould, and direction are determined at a very early stage of its growth ; and which age, or accident, or violence may make fewer, but which can never become more numerous than they are. I have already noticed a familiar example of this, namely, the dropping within historic times of the dual in Greek. And not in Greek only ; others also have felt that this was not worth preserving, or at all events that no

more full, complete, and consistent are its forms ; that the later we find it existing, the more compressed, colloquial and business-like it has become. Like the trees of our forests, it grows at first wild, luxuriant, rich in foliage, full of light and shadow, and flings abroad in its vast branches the fruits of a youthful and vigorous nature ; transplanted to the garden of civilisation and trained for the purposes of commerce, it becomes regulated, trimmed, pruned—nature indeed still gives it life, but art prescribes the direction and extent of its vegetation. Always we perceive a compression, a gradual loss of fine distinctions, a perishing of forms, terminations, and conjugations in the younger state of the language. The truth is, that in a language up to a certain period, there is a real indwelling vitality, a principle acting unconsciously, but pervasively in every part : men wield their forms of speech as they do their limbs—spontaneously, knowing nothing of their construction or the means by which these instruments possess their power. It may be even said that the commencement of the age of self-consciousness is indential with the close of that of vitality in language.'

serious inconvenience would follow from its dismissal. There is no such number in the modern German, Danish, or Swedish; in the old German and Norse there was. In other words, the stronger logic of a later day has 'found no reason for splitting the idea of *moreness* into *twoness* and *muchness*,' as Mommsen has quaintly put it.

How many niceties, delicacies, subtleties of language, *we*, speakers of the English tongue, in the course of centuries have got rid of; how bare (whether too bare is another question), we have stripped ourselves; what simplicity, for better or for worse, reigns in the present English, as compared with earlier stages of the same. Once it owned six declensions, it owns at present but one; it had three genders, English as it now is, if we except one or two words, has none; and the same fact meets us, at what point soever we compare the grammar of the past with that of the present. Let me here repeat that in an estimate of the gain or loss, we must not put certainly to loss everything which a language has dismissed, any more than everything to gain which it has acquired. Unnecessary and superfluous forms are no real wealth. They are often an embarrassment and an encumbrance rather than a help. The Finnish language, which has fifteen cases,¹ need not excite the envy of those who may have only five. The half, or less than the half, will often here prove more than the whole. It therefore seems to me that some words of Otfried Müller, in many ways admirable, exaggerate the disadvantages consequent on a reduction of the forms of a language.

¹ Barnes, *Philological Grammar*, p. 106.

‘It may be observed,’ he says, ‘that in the lapse of ages, from the time that the progress of language can be observed, grammatical forms, such as the signs of cases, moods and tenses, have never been increased in number, but have been constantly diminishing. The history of the Romance, as well as of the Germanic, languages shows in the clearest manner how a grammar, once powerful and copious, has been gradually weakened and impoverished, until at last it preserves only a few fragments of its ancient inflections. Now there is no doubt that this luxuriance of grammatical forms is not an essential part of a language, considered merely as a vehicle of thought. It is well known that the Chinese language, which is merely a collection of radical words destitute of grammatical forms, can express even philosophical ideas with tolerable precision; and the English, which, from the mode of its formation by a mixture of different tongues, has been stripped of its grammatical inflections more completely than any other European language, seems, nevertheless, even to a foreigner, to be distinguished by its energetic eloquence. All this must be admitted by every unprejudiced inquirer; but yet it cannot be overlooked, that this copiousness of grammatical forms, and the fine shades of meaning which they express, evince a nicety of observation, and a faculty of distinguishing, which unquestionably prove that the race of mankind among whom these languages arose was characterized by a remarkable correctness and subtlety of thought. Nor can any modern European, who forms in his mind a lively image of the classical languages in their ancient grammatical luxuriance, and compares them with his

mother tongue, conceal from himself that in the ancient languages the words, with their inflections, clothed as it were with muscles and sinews, come forward like living bodies, full of expression and character, while in the modern tongues the words seem shrunk up into mere skeletons.'¹

Whether languages are as much impoverished by this process as is here assumed, may be fairly questioned. Let me offer some materials which shall assist you in judging for yourselves on the matter ;² not adducing forms which the language has relinquished

¹ *Literature of Greece*, p. 5.

² I will also append the judgment of another scholar (Renan, *Les Langues Sémitiques*, p. 412) : Bien loin de se représenter l'état actuel comme le développement d'un germe primitif moins complet et plus simple que l'état qui a suivi, les plus profonds linguistes sont unanimes pour placer à l'enfance de l'esprit humain des langues synthétiques, obscures, compliquées, si compliquées même que c'est le besoin d'un langage plus facile qui a porté les générations postérieures à abandonner la langue savante des ancêtres. Il serait possible, en prenant l'une après l'autre les langues de presque tous les pays où l'humanité a une histoire, d'y vérifier cette marche constante de la synthèse à l'analyse. Partout une langue ancienne a fait place à une langue vulgaire, qui ne constitue pas, à vrai dire, un idiôme nouveau, mais plutôt une transformation de celle qui l'a précédée : celle-ci, plus savante, chargée de flexions pour exprimer les rapports infiniment délicats de la pensée, plus riche même dans son ordre d'idées, bien que cet ordre fût comparativement moins étendu, image en un mot de la spontanéité primitive, où l'esprit accumulait les éléments dans une confuse unité, et perdait dans le tout la vue analytique des parties ; le dialecte moderne, au contraire, correspondant à un progrès d'analyse, plus clair, plus explicite, séparant ce que les anciens assemblaient, brisant les mécanismes de l'ancienne langue pour donner à chaque idée et à chaque relation son expression isolée.

long ago, but mainly such as it is relinquishing at this present. This process, as it affects these last, and as we ourselves are at this instant helping to set it forward, will have more than a merely archaic interest for us. Thus the words which retain the Romance female termination in 'ess,'¹ as 'heir,' which makes 'heiress,' and 'prophet' 'prophetess' (or 'prophetisse,' as it is in Coverdale), are every day becoming fewer. This has already fallen away in so many instances, and is evidently becoming of unfrequent use in so many more, that, if we may augur of the future from the analogy of the past, it will one day wholly vanish from our tongue. Thus all these occur in Wiclif's Bible: 'techeress' (2 Chron. xxxv. 25); 'friendess' (Prov. vii. 4); 'servantess' (Gen. xvi. 2); 'leperess' (= saltatrix, Ecclus. ix. 4); 'daunceress' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'neighbouress' (Exod. iii. 22); 'sinneress' (Luke vii. 37); 'purpuress' (Acts xvi. 14); 'cousiness' (Luke i. 36); 'slayeress' (Tob. iii. 9); 'devouress' (Ezek. xxxvi. 13); 'spousess' (Prov. v. 19); 'thralless' (Jer. xxxiv. 16); 'dwelleress' (Jer. xxi. 13); 'waileress' (Jer. xix. 17); 'cheseress' (= electrix, Wisd. viii. 4); 'singeress' (2 Chron. xxxv. 25); 'breakeress,' 'waiteress,' this last, indeed, having recently come up again. Add to these 'souteress' (*Piers Ploughman*), 'chideress,' 'constableness,' 'moveress,' 'jangleress,' 'vengeress,' 'soudaness' (= sultana), 'guideress,' 'charmeress' (all in Chaucer); 'forgeress,' 'graveress,' 'goldsmithess,' 'bigelouress' (all in the *Pilgrimage of the Life of Manhood*). Others reached to far later periods of the language; thus 'vanqueress' (Fabyan),

¹ Diez, *Rom. Gram.*, vol. iii. pp. 277, 326, 344.

'Ethiopess' (Raleigh), 'exactress' (Isai. xiv. 4, margin),
 'inhabitress' (Jer. x. 17); 'poisoneress' (Greneway);
 'knightess' (Udal); 'oratress' (Warner), 'pedleress,'
 'championess,' 'vassaless,' 'avengeress,' 'warriouress,'
 'victoreess,' 'conqueress,' 'creatress,' 'tyranness,' 'Ti-
 taness,' 'Britoness' (all in Spenser); 'offendress,' 'for-
 nicatress,' 'cloistress,' 'jointress' (all in Shakespeare);
 'vowess' (Holinshed); 'ministress,' 'paintress,' 'flatter-
 ess,' 'directress' (all in Holland); 'captainess' (Sid-
 ney); 'treasuress' (*The Golden Boke*); 'saintess' (Sir T.
 Urquhart); 'leadress' (F. Thynne); 'heroess,' 'dra-
 goness,' 'butleress,' 'contendress,' 'waggoness,' 'rec-
 tress' (all in Chapman); 'shootress' (Fairfax);
 'archeress' (Fanshawe); 'architectress' (Sandys);
 'clientess,' 'pandress' (both in Middleton); 'papess,'
 'Jesuitess' (both in Bishop Hall); 'incitress' (Gay-
 ton); 'mediatress' (H. More); 'fautress,' 'herdess'
 (both in Browne); 'neatress' (= neat-herdess,
 Warner); 'soldieress,' 'guardianess,' 'votaress' (all
 in Beaumont and Fletcher); 'comfortress,' 'fosteress'
 (both in Ben Jonson); 'factress' (Ford); 'soveraint-
 ess' (Sylvester); 'preserveress' (Daniel); 'hermitress'
 (Drummond); 'emulatress' (Skelton); 'solicitress,'
 'impostress,' 'buildress,' 'intrudress' 'presidentess'
 (all in Fuller); 'favouress' (Hakewell); 'command-
 ress' (Burton); 'monarchess,' 'discipless' (Speed);
 'auditress,' 'cateress,' 'chantress,' 'prelatess' (all in
 Milton); 'saviouress' (Jeremy Taylor); 'citess,'
 'divineress' (both in Dryden); 'deaness' (Sterne);
 'detractress' (Addison); 'hucksteress' (Howell);
 'tutoress,' 'legislatress' (both in Shaftesbury); 'farm-
 eress' (Lord Peterborough, *Letter to Pope*); 'suitress'
 (Rowe); 'nomenclatress' (*Guardian*); 'pilgrimess,'

‘cellaress,’ ‘laddess,’ this last still surviving in the contracted form of ‘lass ;’ with others which, I doubt not, a completer catalogue would contain.¹

The same has happened with another feminine suffix, with the Saxon ‘ster,’ which takes the place of ‘er,’ where a female doer is intended.² ‘Spinner’ and ‘spinster’ are the only pair of such words which still survive. There were formerly many such ; thus ‘baker’ had ‘bakester,’ being the female who baked ; ‘brewer’ had ‘brewster’ (*Piers Ploughman*) ; ‘sewer’ ‘sewster’ (Ben Jonson) ; ‘reader’ ‘readster ;’ ‘seamer’ ‘seamster ;’ ‘weaver’ ‘webster’ (Golding, *Ovid*, p. 77) ; ‘fruiterer’ ‘fruitester ;’ ‘tumbler’ ‘tumblester’ (both in Chaucer) ; ‘hanger’ or ‘hangman’ ‘hangstre ;’ ‘host’ ‘hostestre’ (*Ayenbite*) ; ‘knitter’ ‘knitster’ (the word still lives in Devon) : ‘harpster’ I have never met in use ; but I have seen it quoted. Add to these ‘whitster’ (a female bleacher, Shakespeare), ‘bandster,’ the woman binding up the sheaves (Cleveland dialect), ‘wafrester,’ the woman making wafers for the priest (*Piers Ploughman*) ; ‘kempster’ (pectrix), ‘dryster’ (siccatrix), ‘brawdster’ (= embroideress), and ‘salster’ (salinaria).³ It is a singular evidence of the richness of a language in forms at the earlier stages of its existence, that not a

¹ In Cotgrave’s *Dictionary* I note ‘praiseress,’ ‘commendress,’ ‘fluteress,’ ‘possessorress,’ ‘loveress,’ ‘regentess,’ but have never met them in use.

² On this termination see J. Grimm, *Deutsche Gram.*, vol. ii. p. 134 ; vol. iii. p. 339 ; Donaldson, *New Cratylus*, 3rd edit. p. 419.

³ I owe these last four to a *Nominales* in the *National Antiquities*, vol. i. p. 216.

few of the words which had, as we have just seen, a feminine termination in 'ess,' had also a second in 'ster.' Thus 'daunser,' beside 'daunseress,' had also 'daunster' (Ecclus. ix. 4); 'wailer,' beside 'waileress,' had 'wailster' (Jer. ix. 17); 'dweller' 'dwelster' (Jer. xxi. 13); and 'singer' 'singster' (2 Kin. xix. 35); so too, 'chider' had 'chidester' (Chaucer), as well as 'chideress,' 'slayer' 'slayster' (Tob. iii. 9), as well as 'slayeress,' 'chooser' 'chesister' (Wisd. viii. 4), as well as 'cheseress,' with others that might be named.

It is impossible then to subscribe to Marsh's statement, high as his authority on a matter of English scholarship must be, when he affirms, 'I find no positive evidence to show that the termination "ster" was ever regarded as a feminine termination in English.'¹ It has indeed been urged that the existence of such words as 'seamstress,' 'songstress,' is decisive proof that the ending 'ster' or 'estre,' of itself was not counted sufficient to designate persons as female; since if 'seamster' and 'songster' had been felt to be already feminine, no one would have thought of doubling on these, and adding a second female termination; 'seamstress,' 'songstress.' But all which this proves is, that when the final 'ess' was super-added to these already feminine forms, and all examples of it belong to a comparatively late period of the

¹ If indeed he had said that there are certain perplexing exceptions to this rule, words with this termination, although very few, applied at an early date to men and not to women, as 'dempster' for example, this, but not more than this, would be true; see Morris, *English Accidence*, p. 89; Mätzner, *Engl. Gram.*, p. 243.

language, the true significance of this ending had been lost sight of and forgotten.¹ The same may be affirmed of such other of these feminine forms as are now applied to men, such as 'gamester,' 'youngster,' 'oldster,' 'drugster' (South), 'huckster,' 'hackster' (= swordsman, Milton, prose), 'seedster' (= sower), 'teamster,' 'throwster,' 'rhymester,' 'punster' (*Spectator*), 'tapster,' 'maltster,' 'whipster,' 'lewdster' (Shakespeare), 'trickster.' Either like 'teamster,' and 'punster,' the words did not come into being till the force of this termination was altogether forgotten;² or like 'tapster,' which was still female in Skelton's time ('a *tapster* like a lady bright'), as it is now in Dutch and Frisian, being distinguished from 'tapper,' the *man* who has charge of the tap, or as 'bakester,' at this day used in Scotland for 'baker,' as 'dyester' for 'dyer,' the word did originally belong of right and exclusively to women;³ but with the gradual

¹ Richardson's earliest example of 'seamstress' is from Gay, of 'songstress,' from Thomson. I find however 'sempstress' in Olearius' *Voyages and Travels*, 1669, p. 43. As late as Ben Jonson, 'seamster' and 'songster' expressed the *female* seamer and singer; in his *Masque of Christmas*, one of the children of Christmas is 'Wassel, like a neat *sempster* and *songster*; her page bearing a brown bowl.' Compare a passage from *Holland's Leaguer*, 1632: 'A *tyre-woman* of phantastical ornaments, a *sempster* for ruffes, cuffes, smocks and waistcoats.'

² This was about the time of Henry VIII. In proof of the confusion which reigned on the subject in Shakespeare's time, see his use of 'spinster' as = 'spinner,' the *man* spinning, *Henry VIII.*, Act i. Sc. 2; and doubtless too in *Othello*, Act i. Sc. 1. And a little later, in Howell's *Vocabulary*, 1659, 'spinner' and 'spinster' are *both* referred to the male sex, and the barbarous 'spinstress' invented for the female.

³ The Latin equivalent for 'maltster' in the *Promptorium Parvulorum* is 'brasiatrix.'

transfer of the occupation to men, and an increasing forgetfulness of what this termination implied, there went also a transfer of the name,¹ just as in other

¹ In the *Nominalia* referred to, p. 215, the words, 'hæc auxiatix, a *hukster*,' occur. That the huckster is properly the *female* pedlar is sufficiently plain. 'To hawk' was formerly 'to huck'—it is so used by Bishop Andrews, and the 'hucker' or hawker (the German 'höker' or 'höcker') is the *man* who 'hucks,' 'hawks,' or peddles, the 'huckster' the *woman* who does the same. Howell then and others employing 'hucksteress,' fall into the same barbarous excess of expression, whereof we are all guilty in 'seamstress' and 'songstress.' I take the opportunity of noting another curious excess of expression that has succeeded in establishing itself in the language. In books of two or three hundred years ago, we find 'adulter' (Tyndale), 'poulter' (Shakespeare), 'cater' (Drayton), 'royster' (Gascoigne), 'upholster' (Strype), 'embroider' (Holland), 'stutter' (the same); and these all sufficiently justify themselves; 'adulter,' a transfer of a Latin word into English, 'poulter' one dealing in poult, 'cater,' in cates, 'stutter' one that stuts, and so on; but the sense of this final 'er,' the remnant of the Anglo-Saxon 'wer,' a man, and of what it indicates, namely the habitual doer of a thing, is so strong, that men could not be content without adding it a second time to all these words; and they are severally now 'adulterer,' 'poulterer,' 'caterer,' 'roysterer,' 'upholsterer,' 'embroiderer,' 'stutterer.' 'Launder' in like manner became 'launderer,' though both one and the other have now given way to 'laundress;' and 'augur,' in Shakespeare at least, 'augurer,' though this is not a perfect parallel. That this superaddition has its root in the linguistic instinct of our people is evident from the fact that the same has been attempted in other words, though without the same success; thus 'fisherer' (it occurs in Cotgrave) is in provincial usage for 'fisher' (see Forby and other local glossaries); and the same has extended to words of a different formation, as to 'burglarer' for 'burglar' (Butler's *Hudibras*); to 'musicianer,' 'physicianer,' 'masoner' (all in Forby); to 'politicianer,' a vulgar Americanism; to 'poeter,' a vulgar Anglicism, and to others.

words, and out of the same causes, the converse finds place; and 'baker' or 'brewer,' not 'bakester' or 'brewster,' would be now applied to the woman baking or brewing. So entirely has this power of the language died out, that it survives more apparently than really even in 'spinner' and 'spinster;' seeing that 'spinster' has now quite another meaning than that of a woman spinning; whom, as well as the man, we should call, not a 'spinster,' but a 'spinner.'¹ It would be hard to believe, but for the constant experience we have of the fact, how soon and how easily the true law and significance of some form, which has never ceased to be in everybody's mouth, may yet be lost sight of by all. No more curious chapter in the history of language could be written than one which should trace the transgressions of its most primary laws, the violations of analogy and the like, which follow hereupon; the plurals, as 'chicken,'² which are dealt with as singulars, the singulars, like 'riches' (*richesse*),³ 'pease' (*pisum*,

¹ *Notes and Queries*, No. 157.

² When Wallis wrote, it was only beginning to be forgotten that 'chick' was the singular, and 'chicken' the plural: '*Sunt qui dicunt* in singulari "chicken," et in plurali "chickens;"' and even now the words are in many country parts correctly employed. In Sussex, a correspondent writes, they would as soon think of saying 'oxens' as 'chickens.'

³ See Chaucer, *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1032, where *Richesse*, 'an high lady of great noblesse,' is one of the persons of the allegory. In Tyndale's Version of the Bible we read at James v. 2, 'Your riches *is* corrupte;' in the Geneva 'is' gives place to 'are,' which stands in our Version. This has so entirely escaped Ben Jonson, English scholar as he was, that in his *Grammar* he cites 'riches' as an example of an English word

pois),¹ 'alms' ('almesse' in Coverdale), 'eaves,' 'summons' (summoneas), 'Cyclops,' which on the score of the final 's' are assumed to be plurals.

One example of the kind is familiar to us all; to which yet it may be worth adverting as a signal example of this forgetfulness which may overtake a whole people, of the true meaning of a grammatical form which they have never ceased to employ. I refer to the mistaken assumption that the 's' of the genitive, as 'the king's countenance,' was merely a more rapid way of pronouncing 'the king *his* countenance,' and that the final 's' in 'king's' was in fact an elided 'his.' This explanation for a long time prevailed almost universally; I believe there are many who accept it still. It was in vain that here and there one more accurately acquainted with the past history of our tongue protested against this 'monstrous syntax,' as Ben Jonson justly calls it.² It was in vain that Wallis, another English scholar of the seventeenth century, pointed out that the slightest examination of the facts revealed the untenable character of this explanation, seeing that we do not merely say 'the *king's* countenance,' but 'the *queen's* countenance;' where 'the queen *his* countenance' cannot be intended;³ we do not say merely 'the *child's*

wanting a singular; and at a later day Wemyss (*Biblical Gleanings*, p. 212) complains of a false concord at Rev. xviii. 17: 'For in one hour so great riches *is* come to nought.'

¹ 'Set shallow brooks to surging seas,
An orient pearl to a white *pease*.'—*Puttenham*.

² It is curious that, despite this protest, one of his plays has for its name, *Sejanus his Fall*.

³ Even this does not startle Addison, or cause him any mis-

bread,' but 'the *children's* bread,' where it is no less impossible to resolve the phrase into 'the children *his* bread.'¹ Notwithstanding these protests, the error held its ground. This much indeed of a plea it could make for itself, that such an actual employment of 'his' *had* found its way into the language, as early as the fourteenth century, and had been in occasional, though rare use, from that time downward.² Yet this, which has only been elicited by the researches of recent scholars, does not in the least justify those who assumed that in the ordinary 's' of the genitive were to be found the remains of 'his'—an error from which the books of scholars in the seventeenth, and in the early decades of the eighteenth, century are not a whit clearer than those of others. Spenser, Donne,

giving ; on the contrary he boldly asserts (*Spectator*, No. 135), 'The same single letter "s" on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the "his" or "her" of our forefathers.'

¹ Wallis excellently well disposes of this scheme, although less successful in showing what this 's' does mean than in showing what it cannot mean (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, c. v.): Qui autem arbitrantur illud s, loco *his* adjunctum esse (priori scilicet parte per aphæresim abscissâ), ideoque apostrophî notam semper vel pingendam esse, vel saltem subintelligendam, omnino errant. Quamvis enim non negem quin apostrophî nota commode nonnunquam affigi possit, ut ipsius litteræ s usus distinctius, ubi opus est, percipiatur ; ita tamen semper fieri debere, aut etiam ideo fieri quia vocem *his* innuat, omnino nego. Adjungitur enim et foeminarum nominibus propriis, et substantivis pluralibus, ubi vox *his* sine solœcismo locum habere non potest : atque etiam in possessivis *ours*, *yours*, *theirs*, *hers*, ubi vocem *his* innui nemo somniaret.

² See the proofs in Marsh, *Manual of the English Language*, English Edit., pp. 280, 293.

Fuller, Jeremy Taylor, all fall into it ; Dryden more than once helps out his verse with an additional syllable in this way gained. It has forced itself into our Prayer Book, where the 'Prayer for all conditions of men,' added at the last revision of the Book in 1662, ends with these words, 'and this we beg for Jesus Christ *his* sake.'¹ I need hardly tell you that this 's' is in fact the one remnant of flexion surviving in the singular number of our English noun substantives ; it is in all the Indo-European languages the original sign of the genitive, or at any rate the earliest of which we can take cognizance ; and just as in Latin 'lapis' makes 'lapidis' in the genitive, so 'king,' 'queen,' 'child,' make severally 'kings,' 'queens,' 'childs,' the apostrophe, an apparent note of elision, being a mere modern expedient, 'a late refinement,' as Ash calls it,² to distinguish the genitive singular from the plural cases.³

I will call to your notice another example of this

¹ It would not exceed the authority of our University Presses, if this were removed from the Prayer Book. Such a liberty they have already assumed with the Bible. In all earlier editions of the Authorized Version it stood at 1 Kin. xv. 14 : 'Nevertheless *Asa his* heart was perfect with the Lord ;' it is '*Asa's* heart' now. In the same way '*Mordecai his* matters' (Esth. iii. 4) has been silently changed into '*Mordecai's* matters ;' while 'by Naomi *her* instruction Ruth lieth at Boaz *his* feet,' in the heading of Ruth iii., has been as little allowed to stand.

² In a good note on the matter, p. 6, in the *Comprehensive Grammar* prefixed to his *Dictionary*, London, 1775.

³ See Grimm, *Deutsche Gram.*, vol. ii. pp. 609, 944 ; and on the remarkable employment of it not merely as the sign of the genitive singular, but also of the genitive plural, Loth, *Angelsächsisch-Englische Grammatik*, p. 203.

willingness to dispense with inflection, of this endeavour to reduce the forms of a language to the fewest possible, consistent with the accurate communication of thought. Of our adjectives in 'en,' formed on substantives, and expressing the material or substance of a thing, the Greek *υπος*, a vast number have gone, many more are going, out of use ; we having learned to content ourselves with the bare juxtaposition of the substantive itself, as sufficiently expressing our meaning. Thus instead of '*golden* pin' we say '*gold* pin ;' instead of '*earthen* works' we say '*earth*-works.' 'Golden' and 'earthen,' it is true, still belong to our living speech, though mainly as part of our poetic diction, or of the solemn and thus stereotyped language of Scripture ; but a whole company of such words have nearly or quite disappeared ; some recently, some long ago. 'Steelen,' 'flowren,' 'thorn-en,' 'clouden,' 'rocken,' 'firen,' belong, so far as I know, only to a very early period of the language ; 'thornen,' however, is still alive in some of our country dialects. 'Rosen' also went early ; Chaucer is my latest authority for it ('*rosen* chapelet') ; as also for 'iven,' or of ivy ; 'stonen' is in Wiclif (John ii. 6) ;¹ 'hairen' in him and in Chaucer. 'Silvern' stood originally in Wiclif's Bible ('*silverne* housis to Diane,' Acts xix. 24) ; but already in the second recension this was exchanged for 'silver ;' 'hornen,' still in our

¹ The existence of 'stony' (=lapidus, steinig) does not make 'stonen' (=lapideus, steinern) superfluous any more than 'earthy' makes 'earthen' and 'earthly.' That part of the field in which the good seed withered so quickly (Matt. xiii. 5) was 'stony ;' the vessels which held the water turned into wine (John ii. 6) were 'stonen.'

dialects, he also employs, with 'clayen' (Job iv. 19), and 'iverene' or made of ivory (Cant. vi. 4). 'Bonen,' or made of bone, occurs in the *Townley Mysteries*; 'birchen' in Tyndale; 'tinnen' in Sylvester; while in Bacon it is never 'the *Milky Way*,' but 'the *Milken*.' In the coarse polemics of the Reformation the phrase, 'broaden god,' provoked by the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation, is of frequent recurrence, and is found as late as in Oldham. 'Mothen parchments' is in Fulke; 'twiggen bottle' and 'threaden sail' in Shakespeare; 'yewen' or 'ewghen bow,' in Spenser; 'cedarn alley' and 'azurn sheen' in Milton; 'boxen leaves' in Dryden; 'a corden ladder' in Arthur Brooke; 'a treen cup' in Jeremy Taylor; 'eldern popguns' in Sir Thomas Overbury; 'a glassen breast' in Whitlock; 'a reeden hat' in Coryat; 'a wispen garland' in Gabriel Harvey; 'yarnen' occurs in Turberville; 'fursen' in Holland; while 'bricken,' 'papern,' 'elmen,' appear from our provincial glossaries to be still in use.¹

It is true that some of these adjectives still hold their ground; but the roots which sustain even these are being gradually cut away from beneath them. Thus 'brazen' might at first sight seem as strongly established in the language as ever; but this is very far from the case. Even now it only lives in a tropical and secondary use, as 'a *brazen* face;' or if in a literal, in poetic diction or in the consecrated language of Scripture, as 'the *brazen* serpent;' otherwise we

¹ For a long list of words of this formation which never passed from Early into Middle English, see Loth, *Angelsächsisch-Englische Grammatik*, p. 332.

say 'a *brass* farthing,' 'a *brass* candlestick.' It is the same with 'oaten,' 'oaken,' 'birchen,' 'beechen,' 'strawen,' and many more, whereof some are obsolescent, some obsolete, the language manifestly tending now, as it has tended for centuries past, to the getting quit of them all, and to the satisfying itself with an adjectival apposition of the substantive instead.

There are other examples of the manner in which a language, as it travels onward, simplifies itself, approaches more and more to a grammatical and logical uniformity, seeks to do the same thing always in the same manner ; where it has two or more ways of conducting a single operation, disuses, and so loses, all save one ; and thus becomes, no doubt, easier to be mastered, more handy and manageable ; for its very riches were to many an embarrassment and a perplexity ; but at the same time limits and restrains its own freedom of action, and is in danger of forfeiting elements of strength, variety and beauty, which it once possessed. Take for instance the tendency of our verbs to let go their strong preterites, and to substitute weak ones in their room ; or, where they have two or three preterites, to retain only one of these, and that almost invariably the weak. But here let me explain what these terms, strong preterites and weak—terms objected to by some, but with no sufficient reason—severally mean. The Indo-European languages at the earliest period that we know formed their preterites by reduplication, by a repetition that is of the root ; of which not inconsiderable traces still remain in the Latin, as in 'cano' 'cecini,' 'tundo' 'tutudi,' and, though not so clearly, in 'video,' 'vidi' = 'vividi;' while the same forms part of the

regular scheme of the Greek conjugation. But this reduplication only survived in one of the Teutonic dialects. From the Anglo-Saxon it had died out, leaving the very faintest traces behind it, long before it comes within the scope of our vision. With the perishing of this, the internal vowel-change, or variation of the radical vowel (we want some good equivalent for the German 'ablaut'), which appears to have been properly no more than an euphonic process, was adopted as a means of marking flexion, and as the sign of the past; thus 'grow' 'grew,' 'cleave' 'clove,' 'dive' 'dove.' At the same time there must have been that of indeterminate and capricious about this which caused men to seek for some plainer and more obvious sign; and as often as new verbs were introduced into the language, they marked the preterite in these by adding to the verb in its crude state 'd,' or for euphony's sake 't,' this suffix being a mutilated form of the auxiliary verb 'do,' and united to the root by aid of the vowel 'e;' thus 'I thank,' in the perfect 'I thank-e-d;' leaving in most instances the radical vowel unchanged. It will follow from this that the strong verbs are invariably the older, the weak the newer, in the language.¹

But for all this the victory has not remained with

¹ Grimm (*Deutsche Gram.*, vol. i. p. 1040): Dass die starke Form die ältere, kräftigere, innere; die schwache die spätere, gehemmtere und mehr äusserliche sey, leuchtet ein. Elsewhere, speaking generally of inflections by internal vowel change, he characterizes them as a 'chief beauty' (hauptschönheit) of the Teutonic languages. Marsh (*Manual of the English Language*, p. 233, English ed.) protests, though, as it seems to me, on no sufficient grounds, against these terms 'strong' and 'weak,' as themselves fanciful and inappropriate.

the strong. Multitudes of these have already disappeared, many more are in process of disappearing. For example, 'shape' has now a weak preterite, 'shaped,' it had once a strong one, 'shope' (Coverdale); 'bake' has now a weak preterite, 'baked,' it had once a strong one, 'boke;' the preterite of 'glide' is now 'glided,' it was once 'glode' or 'glid;' 'help' makes now 'helped,' it made once 'halp' and 'holp.' 'Creep' made 'crope,' still current in the north of England, and 'crep' (*Story of Genesis*); 'weep' 'wope' and 'wep;' 'yell' 'yoll;' 'starve' 'storve;' 'washe' 'wishe' (all in Chaucer); 'seethe' 'soth' or 'sod' (Gen. xxv. 29); 'sheer' once made 'shore;' as 'leap' made 'lep' and 'lope' (Spenser); 'snow' 'snew;' 'thaw' 'thew;' 'gnaw' 'gnew;' 'sow' 'sew;' 'delve' 'dalf' and 'dolve;' 'sweat' 'swat;' 'yield' 'yold' (both in Spenser) and also 'yald;' 'reach' 'raught;' 'melt' 'molt;' 'wax' 'wex' and 'wox;' 'squeeze' 'squoze;' 'laugh' 'leugh;' 'knead' 'kned;' 'beat' 'bet' (Coverdale); with others more than can be enumerated here.¹ A

¹ The entire ignorance as to the past historic evolution of the language, with which some have undertaken to write about it, is curious. Thus the author of *Observations upon the English Language*, without date, but published about 1730, treats all these strong preterites as of recent introduction, counting 'knew' to have lately expelled 'knowed,' 'rose' to have acted the same part towards 'rised,' and of course esteeming them so many barbarous violations of the laws of the language; and concluding with the warning that 'great care must be taken to prevent their increase.' !!—p. 24. Cobbett does not fall into this absurdity, yet proposes in his *English Grammar*, that they should all be abolished as inconvenient. There are two letters in *The Spectator*, Nos. 78 and 80, on the relations between 'who,'

very large number of these strong forms still hold their ground in our provincial dialects.

Observe further that where verbs have not actually renounced their strong preterites, contenting themselves with weak in their room, yet, once possessing two, perhaps three of these strong, they now retain only one. The others they have let go. Thus 'chide' had once 'chid' and 'chode,' but though 'chode' is in our Bible (Gen. xxxi. 36), it has not maintained itself in our speech; 'sling' had 'slung' and 'slang' (1 Sam. xvii. 49); only 'slung' remains; 'fling' had once 'flung' and 'flang;' 'strive' had 'strove' and 'strave' (Holland); 'smite' had 'smote' and 'smate;' 'tread' had 'trod' and 'trad;' 'choose' had 'chose' and 'chase' (Elyot); 'give' had 'gove' and 'gave;' 'spin' 'spun' and 'span;' 'steal' 'stole' and 'stale;' 'lead' had 'lode' 'led' and 'lad;' 'write' 'writ' 'wrote' and 'wrate.' In these instances, and in many more, only one preterite remains in use.

Observe too that wherever a struggle is now going forward between weak and strong forms, which at the present shall continue, the weak are carrying the day: 'climbed' is gaining the upper hand of 'clomb,' 'swelled' of 'swoll,' 'hanged' of 'hung.' There are, it is true, exceptions to this; and these not quite so few as at first one might suppose. Thus 'they have *digged* a pit' stands in our Bible; we should now say 'dug.' 'Shaked' 'shined' 'wringed' and 'shrinked' in like manner are there; while we only admit 'shook'

'which,' and 'that,' singularly illustrative of the same absolute ignorance of the whole past of the language. The writers throughout assume 'that' to have recently displaced 'which,' as a relative pronoun!

'shone' 'wrung' and 'shrunk' or 'shrank;' 'to catch' had 'catched' (Bacon) as well as 'caught;' 'to strive' had 'strived' (in Spenser); 'to stick' makes 'sticked' in Coverdale's Bible; it has only 'stuck' for a preterite now; in the same 'to swim' had 'swimmed;' it has now only 'swum' or 'swam.' 'Growed' and not 'grew' is in *Piers Ploughman* the perfect of 'to grow;' 'spended' and not 'spent' of 'to spend' in Wiclif. But these are the exceptions; and we may anticipate a time, though still far off, when all English verbs will form their preterites weakly; not without serious detriment to the fulness, variety, and force, which in this respect the language even now displays, and once far more signally displayed.¹

It is found in practice that men care very little for a grammatical right or wrong, if by the ignoring of this they can obtain a handier implement for use. The consideration of convenience will override for them every other. Our English verbs formed on the passive participle past of the Latin verb, as for instance 'to devote,' 'to corrupt,' 'to circumcise,' have in a large number of instances been preceded by verbs which formed themselves more correctly from the present tense active; thus 'to devove' (Holland) preceded 'to devote;' 'to corrup' (Wiclif, Mal. iii. 11) 'to corrupt;' 'to circumcide' (Coverdale, Ezek. xvi. 30) 'to circumcise;' though these with others like them, 'to compromit' (Capgrave), 'to suspeck,'

¹ J. Grimm (*Deutsche Gram.*, vol. i. p. 839): Die starke Flexion stufenweise versinkt und ausstirbt, die schwache aber um sich greift. Cf. i. 994, 1040; ii. 5; iv. 509.

‘to correck,’ ‘to instruck’ (all in Coverdale), ‘to inculk’ (Tyndale), have been unable to make good their footing in the language, having every one given place to those which we now employ. We need not look far for the motive which led to the taking of the participle past of the Latin verb as that on which to form the English. In many cases it was difficult, in some apparently impossible, to form this on the Latin present. ‘To devove,’ ‘to corrupt,’ ‘to circumcide’ might pass ; but ‘to suspeck,’ ‘to correck,’ ‘to instruck,’ did not commend themselves much, while yet nothing better could be done with ‘suspicio,’ ‘corrigo,’ ‘instruo ;’ not to say that other verbs out of number, as ‘accipio,’ ‘exhaurio,’ ‘addico,’ ‘macero,’ ‘polluo,’ lent themselves hardly or not at all to the forming in the same way of an English verb upon them. But all was easy if the participle past were recognized as the starting-point ; and thus we have the verbs ‘to accept,’ ‘to exhaust,’ ‘to addict,’ ‘to macerate,’ ‘to pollute,’ with a multitude of others. It is true that these words could not all at once forget that they were already participles past ; and thus side by side with that other usage they continued for a long while to be employed as such ; and instead of ‘instructed,’ ‘dejected,’ ‘accepted,’ ‘exhausted,’ and the rest, as now in use, we find ‘instruct’ (‘elephants *instruct* for war,’ Milton), ‘exhaust’ (Bacon), ‘distract’ (‘the fellow is *distract*,’ Shakespeare), ‘attaint’ (Holland), ‘addict’ (Frith), ‘convict’ (Habington), ‘infect’ (Capgrave), ‘pollute,’ ‘disjoint’ (both in Milton), ‘dilute’ (John Smith), ‘extract’ (Spenser), ‘deduct’ (Frith), ‘contract’ (Shakespeare), ‘abrogate’ (Tyndale), ‘premeditate’ (Holland), ‘elevate’ (Mil-

ton), with many more. Little by little, however, it passed out of men's consciousness that these were past participles already ; and this once forgotten, no scruple was then made of adding to them a second participial sign, and we thus have them in their present shape and use ; 'instructed,' 'exhausted,' and the like.

I return to the subject from which these last remarks have a little led away ; and will urge another proof of the manifest disposition in our language to drop forms and renounce its own inherent powers ; though here also the renunciation, however it may threaten one day to be complete, is only partial at the present. I refer to the formation of our comparatives and superlatives ; and will ask you to observe once more that ever-recurring law of language, namely, that wherever two or more methods of attaining the same result exist, there is always a disposition to drop and dismiss all of these but one, so that the alternative, or choice of ways, once existing shall not exist any more. If only a language can attain a greater simplicity, it seems to grudge no self-improvement by which this result may be brought about. We have two ways of forming our comparatives and superlatives, one inherent in the word itself, and derived from our old Teutonic stock, thus 'bright,' 'brighter,' 'brightest ;' the other supplementary to this, by aid of the auxiliaries 'more' and 'most ;' this latter making its appearance toward the end of the thirteenth century, and being probably due to Norman-French influence. The first, organic we might call it, the indwelling power of the word to mark its own degrees, must needs be esteemed the more excellent

way ; which yet, already disallowed in almost all adjectives of more than two syllables in length, is daily becoming of more restrained application. Compare in this matter our present position with our past. Wiclif forms without scruple such comparatives as 'grievouser,' 'gloriously,' 'patienter,' 'profitabler,' such superlatives as 'grievousest,' 'famousest,' 'preciouslest.' Two centuries later we meet in Tyndale, 'excellenter,' 'miserablest ;' in Roger Ascham, 'inventivest ;' in Shakespeare, 'ancientest,' 'violentest ;' in Gabriel Harvey, 'vendiblest,' 'substantiallest,' 'insolentest ;' in Fuller, 'eloquenter ;' in Rogers, 'insufficienter,' 'goldenest ;' in Beaumont and Fletcher, 'valiantest ;' in Bacon, 'excellentest,' 'honorablest ;' in Sylvester, 'infamousest ;' in North, 'warlikest,' 'unfortunatest.' Milton uses 'sensualest,' 'resoluteest,' 'exquisiteest,' 'virtuosest,' and in prose 'vitiosest,' 'elegantest,' 'artificialest,' 'servilest,' 'sheepishest,' 'moralest ;' Fuller has 'fertilest ;' Baxter 'tediouslest ;' Butler 'dangerouser,' 'preciouslest,' 'intolerablest,' 'preposterousest ;' Burnet 'copiouslest ;' Gray 'impudentest.' Of these forms, and it would be easy to adduce almost any number, we should hardly now employ one. In participles and adverbs in 'ly' these organic comparatives and superlatives hardly survive at all. We do not say 'willingest,' or 'lovingest,' and still less 'repiningest' (Sidney), 'flourishingest,' 'shiningest,' or 'surmountingest,' all which Gabriel Harvey, a foremost master of the English of his time, employs ; 'plenteouslyer,' 'charitabler' (Barnes), 'amplier' (Milton), 'easiest' (Fuller), 'plainliest' (Dryden), 'fulliest,' 'highest' (both in Baxter), would be all inadmissible at present.

In the evident disposition of English at the present moment to reduce the number of words in which this more vigorous scheme of expressing degrees is allowed, we must recognize an evidence that youthful energies in the language are abating, and the stiffness of advancing age making itself felt. Still it fares with us here only as it fares with all languages, in which at a certain stage of their existence auxiliary words, leaving the main word unaltered, are preferred to inflections of this last. Such preference makes itself ever more strongly felt ; and, judging from analogy, I cannot doubt that a day, however distant now, will arrive, when the only way of forming comparatives and superlatives in the English language will be by prefixing 'more' and 'most ;' or, if the other survive, it will be in poetry alone. Doubtless such a consummation is to be regretted ; for our language is too monosyllabic already ; but it is one which no regrets will avert.

It will not fare otherwise, as we may be bold to predict, with the flexional genitive, formed in 's' or 'es.' This too will finally disappear, or will survive only in the diction of poetry. A time will arrive, when it will no longer be free to say as now, either '*the king's sons*,' or '*the sons of the king*,' but when the latter will be the only admissible form. Tokens of this are already evident. The region in which the alternative forms are equally good is daily narrowing. We should not now any more write, 'when *man's Son* shall come' (Wiclif), but 'when *the Son of man* shall come ;' nor yet, '*the hypocrite's hope* shall perish' (Job viii. 13), but '*the hope of the hypocrite* shall perish ;' nor '*the Philistines' land*' (Gen. xxi. 34), but '*the*

land of the Philistines ;' not with Barrow, 'No man can be ignorant of *human life's brevity and uncertainty*,' but 'No man can be ignorant *of the brevity and uncertainty of human life*.' Already in our Authorized Version the more modern form displaces in passages out of number the earlier. Thus at John xviii. 15, it is 'the palace of the High Priest ;' but in Coverdale, 'the High Priest's palace ;' at Heb. ii. 17, 'the sins of the people,' but in earlier Versions 'the people's sins ;' at 1 Pet. iv. 13, 'partakers of the sufferings of Christ,' but in earlier Versions 'partakers of Christ's passions ;' 'the angel of the Lord' (Zech. i. 11), but in Coverdale, 'the Lord's angel.' This change finds place in cases innumerable, but never, so far as I have observed, the converse. The consummation which I have here anticipated may be centuries off, but with other of a like character will assuredly arrive.¹

Then too diminutives are fast disappearing. We prefer to express smallness by an auxiliary word ; thus, a little fist, and not a 'fistock' (Golding), a little lad, and not a 'ladkin,' a little drop, and not a 'droplet' (Shakespeare), a little worm, and not

¹ Schleicher in his masterly treatise, *Die deutsche Sprache*, 1860, p. 69, notes the same as going forward in German : Das Schwinden der Casus und ihren Ersatz durch Präpositionen können wir in unsrer jetzigen deutschen Sprache recht deutlich beobachten. Anstatt süßen Weines voll u. dgl. pflegen wir im gewöhnlichen Leben schon zu sagen, voll von süßem Weine ; ja manche deutsche Volksmundarten haben den Genitiv fast spurlos verloren, und sagen z. B. anstatt 'meines Bruders Sohn' entweder 'der Sohn von meinem Bruder,' oder 'meinem Bruder sein Sohn.'

a 'wormling' (Sylvester). It is true that of diminutives a good many still survive, in all our four terminations of such, as 'hillock,' 'streamlet,' 'lambkin,' 'gosling;' but they are few as compared with those which have perished, and are every day becoming fewer. Where now is 'kingling' (Holland), 'friarling' (Foxe), 'twinling' (= gemellus, *Old Vocabulary*), 'beamlings' (Vaughan), 'whimling' (Beaumont and Fletcher), 'popeling' (Hacket), 'streamling,' 'godling,' 'loveling,' 'dwarfling,' 'shepherdling' (all in Sylvester), 'chasteling' (Becon), 'niceling' (Stubbs), 'poetling,' 'fosterling' (both in Ben Jonson), and 'masterling'? Where now 'porelet' (= paupercula, Isai. x. 30, Vulg.), 'bundelet' (both in Wiclif); 'chastilet' or little castle (*Piers Ploughman*), 'cushionet' (Henry More), 'riveret,' 'orphanet' (both in Drayton), 'closulet,' 'lionet' (both in Phineas Fletcher), 'herblet' (Shakespeare), 'dragonet,' 'arbolet' (both in Spenser), 'havenet,' or little haven, 'pistolet;' or where again is 'bulkin' (Holland), 'thumbkin,' 'canakin,' 'bodikin' (both in Shakespeare), 'ladykin,' 'slamkin' (a slovenly girl); or where 'pillock' (Levins), 'laddock,' 'wifock,' and a hundred more? Even of those remaining to us still many are putting off, or have long since put off, their diminutive sense; a 'pocket' being no longer a *small* poke, nor a 'latchet' a *small* lace, nor a 'trumpet' a *small* trump, as formerly they were. The attempt to form new diminutives on any of these patterns, as when Carlyle invents 'princekin,' is attended with little or no success.

Once more—in the entire dropping among the higher classes, and in some parts of England among all classes, of 'thou,' except in poetry or in addresses

to the Deity, and, consequent on this, in the dropping of the second singular of the verb with its strongly marked flexion, as 'lovest,' 'lovedst,' we have another example of a power which has been allowed to expire. In the seventeenth century 'thou' in English, as at the present 'du' in German, 'tu' in French, was the sign of familiarity, whether that familiarity was of love or of contempt.¹ It was not unfrequently the latter. Thus at Sir Walter Raleigh's trial (1603), Coke, when argument and evidence failed him, insulted, and meant to insult, the illustrious prisoner by applying to him the term 'thou':—'All that Lord Cobham did was at *thy* instigation, *thou* viper! for I *thou* thee, *thou* traitor!' And when Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night* is urging Sir Andrew Aguecheek to send a sufficiently provocative challenge to Viola, he suggests 'that he taunt him with the licence of ink; if thou *thou'st* him some thrice, it shall not be amiss.' To keep this in mind will throw much light on one peculiarity of the Quakers, and give a certain dignity to it, as once maintained, which at present it is very far from possessing. However needless and unwise their determination to 'thee' and 'thou' the whole world, this was not then, as it seems now to us, and, through the silent changes which language has undergone, as now it indeed is, a gratuitous departure from the ordinary usage of society. Right or wrong, it meant something, and had an ethical motive: being indeed a testimony upon their parts, however mis

¹ Thus Wallis (*Gramm. Ling. Anglic.*, 1654): Singulari numero siquis alium compellet, vel dedignantis illud esse solet, vel familiariter blandientis.

placed, that they would not have high or great or rich men's persons in admiration ; nor render the observance to some which they withheld from others. It was a testimony too which cost them something. At present we can very little understand the amount of courage which this 'thou-ing' and 'thee-ing' of all the world demanded on their parts, nor yet the amount of indignation and offence which it stirred up where men were not aware of, or would not allow for, the scruples which, as they considered, obliged them to this.¹ It is, however, in its other aspect that we must chiefly regret the dying out of the use of 'thou'—that is, as the pledge of peculiar intimacy and special affection, as between husband and wife, parents and children, and such other as might be knit together by bands of more than a common love.

I have more than once remarked that nothing can be imagined more stealthy, more calculated to elude observation, than the disappearance of an old form,

¹ What the actual position of the compellation 'thou' was at that time, we learn from Fuller (*Church History, Dedication of Book vii.*) : 'In opposition whereunto [*i.e.* to the Quaker usage] we maintain that *thou* from superiors to inferiors is proper, as a sign of command ; from equals to equals is passable, as a note of familiarity ; but from inferiors to superiors, if proceeding from ignorance, hath a smack of clownishness ; if from affectation, a tone of contempt.' See a brief but instructive disquisition in Skeat's edition of *The Romance of William of Palerne*, p. xli., in proof that in early English literature the distinction between 'thou' and 'ye,' as here laid down, was accurately observed. There is a most interesting and exhaustive treatment of the past relation between 'thou' and 'you' in *Guesses at Truth*, 1866, pp. 120-133 ; and see also Abbott, *A Shakespearean Grammar*, 1870, pp. 153-159.

and the usurpation of its place by a new. Take for instance the getting rid of the plural in 'n' or 'en.' This, originally the Saxon plural in 'an' of the first declension, had, during the anarchical period of the language, spread over a much larger group of words; but, as we all know, has long since given place, partly, no doubt, under French influences, to 's,' which, once the sign in a single declension, is now the almost universal sign of the plural.¹ By steps so slow as to be almost imperceptible, diffused as they have been over vast spaces of time, this dismissal of one and adoption of another has been effected. Long before Chaucer, already in the *Rhymed Chronicle* of Robert of Gloucester, written before 1300, it is evident that the old English termination in 'n' or 'en' is giving way, and that in 's' has virtually won the day; but we do not the less meet in this 'arwen' (arrows), 'steden,' 'sterren,' 'ameten' (emmets), 'chyrchen,' 'massen,' 'been,' 'heveden' (heads), 'applen,' 'candlen,' 'honden,' 'soulen,' 'unclen,' 'lancen,' and others; as in *The Romance of King Alexander*, of the same date, we have 'crabben,' 'hawen,' 'slon' (sloes), 'noten' (nuts). In Chaucer's time they are very far fewer, while yet he has 'doughteren,' 'sistren,' 'fone,' 'ashen,' 'been,' 'shoon,' 'eyne;' but all these side by side with our present 'daughters,' 'sisters,' 'foes,' 'ashes,' 'bees,' 'shoes,' 'eyes;' now one and now the other. Thus the plural in 'n' has narrowed still further the region which it occupies, and is not in exclusive occupation even of this; although still holding a certain ground of its own. Two centuries later 'sistern' is

¹ See Mätzner, p. 220.

still alive ; it is frequent in Coverdale's Bible and in our early Reformers ; and I am told in addresses from the pulpit in America it still goes hand in hand with 'brethren ;' 'peasen' is still the plural of 'pease,' which is itself a singular, the low Latin 'pisum,' 'pea' not having yet been heard of ; 'hosen' too appears in our Authorized Version (Dan. iii. 21), and this though Wiclif already had 'hosis.' 'Fone,' too, and 'shoon,' 'eyne' also, and 'skyen,' are all found in the diction of poetry, but chiefly in that of poets who, like Spenser, affect the archaic. At the present day, setting aside four or five words which have preserved, and will now probably preserve to the end, the termination in 'en,' as 'oxen,' 'chicken,' 'kine' (kyen), 'brethren,' perhaps 'eyne' is the only one of these plurals which even a poet would feel at liberty to employ ; while a few others, as 'housen,' 'fuzzen' (furzes), 'cheesen' (Dorsetshire), and possibly one or two more, maintain a provincial existence.

A history very nearly similar might be traced of the process by which the southern termination of the participle present, namely the suffix 'ing,' has superseded and displaced the northern 'and,' so that we say now 'doing,' 'sitting,' 'leaping,' not 'doand,' 'sittand,' 'leapand.' We have here, it is true, a further circumstance helping to conceal and keep out of sight the progress of the change ; namely, the only gradual melting, through intermediate steps, of the one form into the other, of 'and' into 'end,' into 'ind,' and finally into 'ing,' examples of all these four forms sometimes occurring side by side in the same poem ; for example in *The Romance of William of Palerne*, of date about 1350. Spenser's 'glitterand' (*F. Q.* i.

7, 29) is about the last surviving specimen in English of the northern form ; in Scotch it maintained its ground to a far later day, in some sort maintains it still.¹

It is thus, and by steps such as these, that a change is brought about. That which ultimately is to win all comes in, it may be, at first as an exception ; it then just obtains a footing and allowance ; it next exists side by side and on equal terms with the old ; then overbears it ; and finally, it may be, claims the whole domain of the language as its own ; so that sometimes a single isolated word, like the ‘*paterfamilias*’ of the Latins, is all which survives of what was once the law for all the words of some certain class in a language.

I will not conclude this lecture without one further illustration of the same law, which, as I have sought to show, is evermore working, and causing this and that to be dismissed from a language, so soon as ever the speakers feel that it is not absolutely indispensable, that they can attain their end, which is, to convey their meaning, without it ; though having dwelt on the subject so fully, I shall do little more than indicate this. I refer not here to any change in English now going forward, but to one which completed its course several centuries ago ; namely, to the renouncing upon its part, of any distribution of nouns into masculine, feminine, and neuter, as in German, or even into masculine and feminine, as in French ; and with this, and as a necessary consequence of

¹ See Morris, *English Accidence*, p. 180.

this, the dropping of any flexional modification of the adjectives in regimen with them. It was the boldest step in the way of simplification which the language has at any time taken ; and, after what has lately been said, I need not observe was one which it took centuries to accomplish. Natural *sex*, of course, remains, being inherent in all language ; but grammatical *gender*, with the exception of 'he,' 'she,' and 'it,' and perhaps one or two other fragmentary instances, our language has altogether foregone. An example will make clear the distinction between these. Thus it is not the word 'poetess' which is *feminine*, but the person indicated who is *female*. So too 'daughter,' 'queen,' are in English not *feminine* nouns, but nouns designating *female* persons. Take on the contrary 'filia' or 'regina,' 'fille' or 'reine,' there you have *feminine* nouns as well as *female* persons. We did not inherit this simplicity from others, but, like the Danes, in so far as they have done the like, have made it for ourselves. Whether we turn to the Latin, or, which is for us more important, to the old Teutonic, we find gender ; and in all the daughter languages which were born of the Latin, in most of those which have descended from the ancient Teutonic stock, it is fully established to this day. The practical businesslike character of the English mind asserted itself in the rejection of a distinction, which in a vast proportion of words, that is, in all which are the signs of *inanimate* objects, and as such incapable of sex, rested upon a fiction, and had no ground in the real nature of things. It is only by an act and effort of the imagination that sex,

and thus gender, can be attributed to a table, a ship, or a tree ;¹ and there are aspects, this being one, in which the English is among the least imaginative of all languages, even while it has been employed in some of the mightiest works of imagination which the world has ever seen.²

What, it may be asked, is the meaning and explanation of all this ? It is that at certain earlier periods of a nation's life its genius is synthetic, and at later becomes analytic. At earlier periods the imagination is more than the understanding ; men love to contemplate the thing and the mode of the thing together, as a single idea, bound up in one. But a time arrives when the intellectual obtains the upper hand of the imaginative, when the inclination of those that speak a language is to analyse, to distinguish between

¹ Compare Pott, *Etymologische Forschungen*, part 2, p. 404. The entirely arbitrary character of the attribution of gender to sexless things is illustrated well by the way in which different genders are ascribed in the same book to one and the same thing ; thus in our Authorized Version, 'the tree *his* fruit' (Dan. iv. 14), 'the tree *her* fruit' (Rev. xxii. 1) ; and the different Versions vary, thus 'the vine *her* roots' (Ezek. xvii. 7, E. V.), 'the vine *his* roots' (ibid. Coverdale), 'the salt *his* savour' (Matt. v. 13, E. V.), 'the salt *her* saltness' (ibid. Tyndale). But at a much earlier date it had become to a great extent a matter of subjective individual feeling whether *his* (masculine and neuter) or *her* (feminine) should be employed. The two recensions of Wiclif frequently differ from one another ; thus at Job xxxix. 14, the first, 'the ostridge *her* eggs,' the second, 'the ostridge *his* eggs ;' so too at Gen. viii. 9, the first, 'the culver *his* foot,' the second, 'the culver *her* foot.'

² Compare Chasles, *Études sur l'Allemagne*, p. 25.

these two, and not only to distinguish, but to divide, to have one word for the thing itself, and another for the quality or manner of the thing; and this, as it would appear, is true, not of some languages only, but of all.

LECTURE VII.

CHANGES IN THE MEANING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

I PROPOSE in my present lecture a little to consider those changes which have found or are now finding place in the meaning of English words ; so that, whether we are aware of it or not, we employ them at this day in senses very different from those in which our forefathers employed them of old. You will observe that it is not *obsolete* words, such as have quite fallen out of present use, which I propose to consider ; but such, rather, as are still on the lips of men, although with meanings more or less removed from those which once they possessed. My subject is far more practical, has far more to do with your actual life, than if I were to treat of words at the present day altogether out of use. These last have an interest indeed, but so long as they remain what they are, and are to be found only in our glossaries, it is an interest of an antiquarian character. They constitute a part of the intellectual money with which our ancestors carried on the business of their lives ; but now they are rather medals for the cabinets and collections of the curious than current money for the service of all. Their wings are clipped ; they are '*winged* words' no more ; the spark of thought or feeling, kindling from mind to mind, no longer runs

along them, as along the electric wires of the soul. And then, besides this, there is little danger that any should be misled by them. They are as rocks which, standing out from the sea, declare their presence, and are therefore easily avoided ; while those other are as hidden rocks, which are the more dangerous, that their very existence is unsuspected. A reader lights for the first time on some word which has now passed out of use, as 'frampold,' or 'garboil,' or 'brangle ;' he is at once conscious of his ignorance ; he has recourse to a glossary, or if he guesses from the context at the signification, still his guess is a guess to him, and no more.

But words that have changed their meaning have often a deceivableness about them ; a reader not once doubts but that he knows their intention ; he is visited with no misgiving that they possess for him another force than that which they possessed for the author in whose writings he finds them, and which they conveyed to *his* contemporaries. He little dreams how far the old life may have gone out of them, and a new life entered in. Let us suppose a student to light on a passage like the following (it is from the *Preface* to Howell's *Lexicon*, 1660) : 'Though the root of the English language be *Dutch*, yet it may be said to have been inoculated afterwards on a French stock.' He may know that the Dutch is a dialect of the great Teutonic family of languages, and one very nearly related to our own ; but that it is the root of English will certainly perplex him, and he will hardly know what to make of the assertion ; perhaps he ascribes it to an error in his author, who is thereby unduly lowered in his esteem. But presently in the course of his

reading he meets with the following statement, this time in Fuller's *Holy War*, being a history of the Crusades: 'The French, *Dutch*, Italian, and English were the four elemental nations, whereof this army [of the Crusaders] was compounded.' If the student has sufficient historical knowledge to know that in the time of the Crusades there were no Dutch in our use of the word, this statement would merely startle him; and probably before he had finished the chapter, having his attention once roused, he would perceive that Fuller with the writers of his time used 'Dutch' for German; even as it was constantly so used up to the end of the seventeenth century,—what we call now a Dutchman being then a Hollander,—and as the Americans use it to this present day. But a raw student might very possibly want that amount of previous knowledge, which should cause him to receive this announcement with misgiving and surprise; and thus he might carry away altogether a wrong impression, and rise from a perusal of the book, persuaded that the Dutch, as we call them, played an important part in the Crusades, while the Germans took little or no part in them at all.

And as it is here with an historic fact, so still more often will it happen with the subtler moral and ethical transformations which words have undergone. Out of these it will continually happen that words convey now much more reprobation, or convey now much less, or of a different kind, than once they did; and a reader, not aware of the altered value which they now possess, may be in constant danger of misreading his author, of misunderstanding his intention, and this, while he has no doubt whatever that he perfectly

apprehends and takes it in. Thus when Shakespeare makes the gallant York address Joan of Arc as a 'miscreant,' how coarse a piece of invective this sounds ; how unlike what the chivalrous soldier would have uttered ; or what one might have assumed that Shakespeare, even with his unworthy estimate of the holy warrior-maid, would have put into his mouth. But the 'miscreant' of Shakespeare's time was not the 'miscreant' of ours. He was simply, in agreement with the etymology of the word, a misbeliever, one who did not believe rightly the articles of the Catholic Faith. This I need not remind you was the constant charge which the English brought against the Pucelle, —namely, that she was a dealer in hidden magical art, a witch, and as such had fallen from the faith. On this plea they burnt her, and it is this which York intends when he calls her a 'miscreant,' and not what we should intend by the name.

In poetry above all what beauties are often missed, what forces lost, through this taking for granted that the present meaning of a word accurately represents the past. How often the poet is wronged in our estimation ; that seeming to us now flat and pointless, which would assume quite another aspect did we know how to read into some word the emphasis which it once had, but which now has departed from it. For example, Milton ascribes in *Comus* the '*tinsel-slippered* feet' to Thetis, the goddess of the sea. How comparatively poor an epithet this 'tinsel-slippered' sounds for those who know of 'tinsel' only in its modern acceptation of mean and cheap finery, affecting a splendour which it does not really possess. But learn its earlier use by learning its derivation, bring it back to the French

‘étincelle,’ and the Latin ‘scintillula ;’ see in it, as Milton and the writers of his time saw, ‘the sparkling,’ and how exquisitely beautiful a title does this become applied to a sea-goddess ; how vividly does it call up before our mind’s eye the quick glitter and sparkle of the waves under the light of sun or moon.¹ It is the ‘silver-footed’ (ἀργυρόπεζα) of Homer ; but this not servilely transferred, rather reproduced and made his own by the English poet, dealing as one great poet will do with another ; who will not disdain to borrow, yet to what he borrows will add often a further grace of his own.

Or, again, do we always keep in mind, or are we even aware, that whenever the word ‘influence’ occurs in our English poetry, down to comparatively a modern date, there is always more or less remote allusion to invisible illapses of power, skyey, planetary effects, supposed to be exercised by the heavenly luminaries upon the dispositions and the lives of men ? The ten occasions on which the word occurs in Shakespeare do not offer a single exception. How many a passage starts into new life and beauty and fulness of allusion, when this is present with us ; even Milton’s

‘store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain *influence*,’

as spectators of the tournament, gain something, when we regard them—and using this language, he intended we should—as the luminaries of this lower sphere, shedding by their propitious presence strength and valour into the hearts of their champions.

¹ So in Herrick’s *Electra* :

‘More white than are the whitest creams,
Or moonlight *tinselling* the streams.’

A word will sometimes even in its present acceptation yield a convenient and even a correct sense ; the last I have cited would do so ; we may fall into no positive misapprehension about it ; and still, through ignorance of its past history and of the force which it once possessed, we may miss much of its significance. We are not *beside* the meaning of our author, but we are *short* of it. Thus in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and no King* (Act iii. Sc. 2), a cowardly braggart of a soldier describes the treatment he experienced, when, like Parolles, he was at length found out, and stripped of his lion's skin :—‘They hung me up by the heels and beat me with hazel sticks, . . . that the whole kingdom took notice of me for a *baffled* whipped fellow.’ Were you reading this passage, there is probably nothing which would make you pause ; you would attach to ‘baffled’ a sense which sorts very well with the context—‘hung up by the heels and beaten, all his schemes of being thought much of were *baffled* and defeated.’ But ‘baffled’ implies far more than this ; it contains allusion to a custom in the days of chivalry, according to which a perjured or recreant knight was either in person, or more commonly in effigy, hung up by the heels, his scutcheon blotted, his spear broken, and he himself or his effigy made the subject of all kinds of indignities ; such a one being said to be ‘baffled.’¹ Twice in Spenser recreant knights are so treated. I can only quote a portion of the shorter passage, in which this infamous punishment is described :

¹ See Holinshed, *Chronicles*, vol. iii. pp. 827, 1218 : Ann. 1513, 1570.

‘And after all, for greater infamy
He by the heels him hung upon a tree,
And *baffled* so, that all which passéd by
The picture of his punishment might see.’¹

Probably when Beaumont and Fletcher wrote, men were not so remote from the days of chivalry, or at any rate from the literature of chivalry, but that this custom was still fresh in their minds. How much more to them than to us, so long as we are ignorant of the same, must their words just quoted have conveyed?

There are several places in the Authorized Version of Scripture, where those who are not aware of the changes which have taken place during the last two hundred and fifty years in our language, can hardly fail of being to a certain extent misled as to the intention of our Translators; or, if they are better acquainted with Greek than with early English, will be tempted to ascribe to them, though unjustly, an inexact rendering of the original. Thus the altered meaning of ‘religion’ may very easily draw after it a serious misunderstanding in that well-known statement of St. James, ‘Pure *religion* and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction.’ ‘There!’ exclaims one who wishes to set up St. James against St. Paul, that so he may escape the necessity of obeying either, ‘listen to what St. James says; there is nothing mystical in what he requires; instead of harping on faith as a condition necessary to salvation, he makes all religion to consist in deeds of active well-doing and kindness one to another.’ But let us pause for a moment. Did ‘re-

¹ *Fairy Queen*, vi. 7, 27; cf. v. 3, 37.

ligion,' when our Version was made, mean godliness? did it mean the *sum total* of our duties towards God? for, of course, no one would deny that deeds of charity are a necessary part of our Christian duty, an evidence of the faith which is in us. There is abundant evidence to show that 'religion' did not mean this; that, like the Greek *θρησκεία*, for which it here stands, like the Latin 'religio,' it meant the outward forms and embodiments in which the inward principle of piety clothed itself, the *external service* of God: and St. James is urging upon those to whom he is writing something of this kind: 'Instead of the ceremonial services of the Jews, which consisted in divers washings and in other elements of this world, let our service, our *θρησκεία*, take a nobler shape, let it consist in deeds of pity and of love'—and it was this which our Translators intended, when they used 'religion' here and 'religious' in the verse preceding. How little 'religion' was formerly in meaning co-extensive with godliness, how predominantly it was used for the *outward* service of God, is plain from many passages in our *Homilies*, and from other contemporary literature.

You remember the words in the Sermon on the Mount, '*Take no thought* for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink' (Matt. vi. 25). They have been often found fault with; and, to quote one of the fault-finders, 'most English critics have lamented the inadvertence of our Authorized Version, which in bidding us *take no thought* for the necessaries of life prescribed to us what is impracticable in itself, and would be a breach of Christian duty even if possible.'¹

¹ Scrivener, *Notes on the New Testament*, vol. i. p. 162.

But there is no 'inadvertence' here. When our Translation was made, 'Take no thought' was a perfectly correct rendering of the words of the original, 'Thought' was then constantly used for painful solicitude and care. Thus Bacon writes, 'Harris an alderman was put in trouble and died of *thought* and anxiety before his business came to an end ;' and in one of the *Somers Tracts* (its date is of the reign of Elizabeth) these words occur: 'In five hundred years only two queens have died in childbirth. Queen Catherine Parr died rather of *thought*.' A still better example occurs in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*—'Take *thought*, and die for Cæsar'—where 'to take thought' is to take a matter so seriously to heart that death ensues.

Again, there are some words in our Liturgy which are not unfrequently misunderstood. In the Litany we ask of God that it would please Him 'to give and preserve to our use the *kindly* fruits of the earth.' What is commonly understood by these '*kindly* fruits of the earth'? The fruits, if I mistake not, in which the *kindness* of God or of nature towards us finds its expression. This is no unworthy meaning to give to the words, but still it is not the right one. The '*kindly* fruits' are the '*natural* fruits,' those which the earth according to its *kind* should naturally bring forth, which it is appointed to produce. To show you how little 'kindly' meant once benignant, as it means now, I will instance an employment of it from Sir Thomas More's *Life of Richard the Third*. He tells us that Richard calculated by murdering his two nephews in the Tower to make himself accounted 'a *kindly* king'—not certainly a 'kindly' one in our present usage of the word ; but, having put them out of the way, that

he should then be lineal heir of the Crown, and should thus be reckoned as king *by kind* or natural descent; and such was of old the constant use of the word. Thus Bishop Andrewes, preaching on the Conspiracy of the Gowries, asks concerning the conspirators,—if indeed conspirators they were, and not rather foully murdered men,—‘Where are they? Gone to their own place, to Judas their brother; as is most *kindly*, the sons to the father of wickedness, there to be plagued with him for ever.’

A phrase in one of our occasional Services, ‘with my body I thee *worship*,’ has perplexed and sometimes offended those who were unacquainted with the early uses of the word, and thus with the intention of the actual framers of that Service. Clearly in our modern sense of ‘worship,’ this language would be inadmissible. But ‘worship’ or ‘worthship’ meant ‘honour’ in our early English, and ‘to worship’ to honour, this meaning of ‘worship’ still very harmlessly surviving in ‘worshipful,’ and in the title of ‘your worship,’ addressed to the magistrate on the bench. So little was it restrained of old to the honour which man is bound to pay to God, that it is employed by Wiclif to express the honour which God will render to his faithful servants and friends. Thus our Lord’s declaration, ‘If any man serve Me, him will my Father *honour*,’ in Wiclif’s translation reads thus, ‘If any man serve Me, my Father shall *worship* him.’ I do not mean that the words, ‘with my body I thee *worship*,’ might not profitably be changed, if only it were possible to touch things indifferent in the Prayer Book, without giving room for a meddling with things which could hardly be touched without extreme

hazard to the peace of the Church. I think they would be very well changed, liable as they are to misconstruction now ; but for all this they did not mean according to their first intention, and therefore do not now really mean, more than ‘with my body I thee *honour*,’ and so you may reply to any gainsayer here.

Take another example of a misapprehension, which lies very near. Fuller, our Church historian, praising some famous divine that was lately dead, exclaims, ‘Oh the *painfulness* of his preaching!’ How easily we might take this for an exclamation wrung out at the recollection of the tediousness which he inflicted on his hearers. It is nothing of the kind ; the words are a record not of the *pain* which he caused to others, but of the *pains* which he bestowed himself: and I cannot doubt, if we had more ‘painful’ preachers in the old sense of the word, that is, who *took* pains themselves, we should have fewer ‘painful’ ones in the modern sense, who *cause* pain to their hearers. So too Bishop Grosthead is recorded as ‘the *painful* writer of two hundred books’—not meaning hereby that these books were ‘painful’ in the reading, but that he was laborious and ‘painful’ in their composing.

Here is another easy misapprehension. Swift wrote a pamphlet, or, as he called it, a *Letter to the Lord Treasurer*, with this title, ‘A proposal for correcting, improving, and *ascertaining* the English Tongue.’ Who that brought a knowledge of present English, and no more, to this passage, would doubt that ‘*ascertaining* the English Tongue’ meant arriving at a certain knowledge of what it was? Swift, however, means something quite different from this. ‘*To ascertain* the English tongue’ was not with him to arrive

at a subjective certainty in our own minds of what that tongue is, but to give an objective certainty to that tongue itself, so that henceforth it should not change any more. For even Swift himself, with all his masculine sense, entertained a dream of this kind, fancied that the growth of a language might be arrested, as is more fully declared in the work itself.¹

In other places unacquaintance with the changes in a word's usage may leave you sorely perplexed and puzzled as to your author's meaning. It is evident that he has a meaning, but what it is you are unable to divine, even though all the words he employs are familiarly employed to the present day. Thus 'courtly Waller,' congratulating Charles the Second on his return from exile, and describing how men, once his bitterest enemies, were now the most earnest to offer themselves to his service, writes thus :

'Offenders now, the chiefest, do begin
To strive for grace, and expiate their sin :
All winds blow fair that did the world embroil,
Your vipers treacle yield, and scorpions oil.'

Readers not a few before now will have been perplexed at the poet's statement that '*vipers treacle yield*'—who yet have been too indolent, or who have not had the opportunity, to search out what his meaning was. There is in fact allusion here to a curious piece of legendary lore. 'Treacle,' or 'triacle,' as Chaucer wrote it, was originally a Greek word, and wrapped up in itself the once popular belief (an anticipation, by the way, of homœopathy), that a confection of the viper's flesh was the most potent antidote against the

¹ *Works* (Sir W. Scott's edition), vol. ix. p. 139.

viper's bite.¹ Waller serves himself of this old legend, familiar enough in his time, for Milton speaks of 'the sovran *treacle* of sound doctrine,'² while 'Venice treacle,' or 'viper-wine,' was a common name for a supposed antidote against all poisons ; and he would say that regicides themselves began to be loyal, vipers not now yielding hurt any more, but rather a healing medicine for the old hurts which they themselves had inflicted. 'Treacle,' it may be observed, designating first this antidote, came next to designate any antidote, then any medicinal confection or sweet syrup, and lastly that particular syrup, namely, the sweet syrup of molasses, to which alone we restrict it now.

I will draw on Fuller for one more illustration. In his *Holy War*, having enumerated the rabble rout of fugitive debtors, runaway slaves, thieves, adulterers, murderers, of men laden for one cause or another with heaviest censures of the Church, who swelled the ranks, and helped to make up the army, of the Crusaders, he exclaims, 'A lamentable case, that the devil's

¹ *Θηριακή*, from *θηρίον*, a designation given to the viper (Acts xxviii. 4). 'Theriac' is only the more rigid form of the same word, the scholarly, as distinguished from the popular, adoption of it. Augustine (*Con. duas Epp. Pelag.* iii. 7): *Sicut fieri consuevit antidotum etiam de serpentibus contra venena serpentum.* See the *Promptorium Parvulorum*, s. v., Way's edition.

² And Chaucer, more solemnly still :

'Christ, which that is to every harm *triacle*.'

The *antidotal* character of treacle comes out yet more in these lines of Lydgate :

'There is no *venom* so parlious in sharpnes,
As whan it hath of *treacle* a likenes.'

black guard should be God's soldiers !' What does he mean, we may ask, by 'the devil's *black guard*'? The phrase does not stand here alone ; it is, on the contrary, of frequent recurrence in the early dramatists and others down to the time of Dryden ; in whose *Don Sebastian*, 'Enter the captain of the rabble, with the *Black guard*,' is a stage direction. What is this 'black guard'? Has it any connection with a word of our homeliest vernacular? None which is very apparent, and yet such as may very clearly be traced. In old times the palaces of our kings and seats of our nobles were not so well and completely furnished as at the present day : and thus it was customary, when a royal progress was made, or when the great nobility exchanged one residence for another, that at such a removal all kitchen utensils, pots and pans, and even coals, should be also carried with them where they went. Those who accompanied and escorted these, the meanest and dirtiest of the retainers, were called 'the black guard ;'¹ then any troop or company of ragamuffins ; and lastly, when the word's history was obscured and men forgot that it properly belonged to a company, to a rabble rout, and not to a single person, one would compliment another, not as belonging to, but as himself being, 'the black guard.'

These examples are sufficient to prove that it is not a useless and unprofitable study, nor yet one altogether without entertainment, to which I invite

¹ 'A slave, that within these twenty years rode with the *black guard* in the Duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping pans' (Webster, *White Devil*, Act i. Sc. 1).

you. It is a study indeed so far from unprofitable, that any one who desires to read with accuracy, and thus with advantage and pleasure, our earlier classics, who would not often fall short of, and often go astray from, their meaning, must needs bestow some attention on the altered significance of English words. And if this be so, we could not more usefully employ what remains of this present lecture than in seeking to indicate those changes which words most frequently undergo ; and to trace as far as we can the causes, moral and material, which bring these changes about, with the good and the evil out of which they have sprung, and to which they bear witness. For indeed these changes are not changes at random, but for the most part are obedient to certain laws, are capable of being distributed into certain classes, being the outward transcripts and attestations of mental and moral processes which have inwardly gone forward in those who bring them about. Many, it is true, will escape any classification of ours ; will seem to us the result of mere caprice, and not to be accounted for by any principle to which we can appeal. But all this admitted freely, a majority will remain which are reducible to some law or other, and with these we will occupy ourselves now.

And first, the meaning of a word oftentimes is gradually narrowed. It was once as a generic name, embracing many as yet unnamed species within itself, which all went by its common designation. By and by it is found convenient that each of these should have its own more special sign allotted to it.¹ It is

¹ Génin (*Lexique de la Langue de Molière*, p. 367) says well : En augmentant le nombre des mots, il a fallu restreindre leur

here just as in some newly enclosed country, where a single household will at first loosely occupy a whole district; this same district being in the course of time parcelled out among twenty proprietors, and under more accurate culture employing and sustaining them all. Thus all food was once called 'meat;' it is so in our Bible, and 'horse-meat' for fodder is still no unusual phrase; yet 'meat' is now a name given only to flesh. Any little book or writing was a 'libel' once; now only such a one as is scurrilous and injurious. Every leader was a 'duke' (dux); thus '*duke* Hannibal' (Sir Thomas Elyot), '*duke* Brennus' (Holland), '*duke* Theseus' (Shakespeare), '*duke* Amalek,' with other 'dukes' in Scripture (Gen. xxxvi.). Every journey, by land as much as by sea, was a 'voyage.' 'Fairy' was not a name restricted, as now, to the *Gothic* mythology; thus 'the *fairy* Egeria' (Sir J. Harrington). A 'corpse' might quite as well be a body living as one dead. In each of these cases, the same contraction of meaning, the separating off and assigning to other words of large portions of this, has found place. 'To starve' (the German 'sterben,' and generally spelt 'sterve' up to the middle of the seventeenth century), meant once to die any manner of death; thus Chaucer says, Christ '*sterved* upon the cross for our redemption;' it now is restricted to the dying by cold or by hunger. Words not a few were once applied to both sexes alike, which are now restricted to the female. It is so even with 'girl,' which was once, as in *Piers Ploughman* and Chaucer, a young person of either

signification, et faire aux nouveaux un apanage aux dépens des anciens.

sex ;¹ while other words in this list, such for instance as 'hoyden' (Milton, prose), 'shrew,' 'harlot,' 'leman' (all in Chaucer), 'coquet' (Phillips, *New World of Words*), 'witch' (Wiclif); 'wench,' 'slut' (Gower), 'termagant' (Bale), 'scold,' 'jade,' 'hag' (Golding), must, in their present exclusive appropriation to the female sex, be regarded as evidences of men's rudeness, and not of women's deserts.

The necessities of an advancing civilization demand more precision and accuracy in the use of words having to do with weight, measure, number, size. Almost all such words as 'acre,' 'furlong,' 'yard,' 'gallon,' 'peck,' were once of a vague and unsettled use, and only at a later day, and in obedience to the necessities of commerce and social life, exact measures and designations. Thus every field was once an 'acre;' and this remains so still with the German 'acker,' and with us when we give the name of 'God's acre' to the consecrated ground in which we lay our dead; it was not till about the reign of Edward the First that 'acre' was commonly restricted to a determined measure and portion of land. Here and there even now a glebeland will be called 'the acre;' and this, though it should contain not one but many of our measured acres. A 'furlong' was a 'furrow-long,' or length of a furrow.² Any pole was a 'yard,'

¹ And no less so in French with 'dame,' by which form not 'domina' only, but 'dominus,' was represented. Thus in early French poetry, 'Dame Dieu' for 'Dominus Deus' continually occurs.

² 'A furlong, quasi furrowlong, being so much as a team in England plougheth going forward, before they return back again' (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, p. 42).

and this vaguer use survives in 'sailyard,' 'halyard,' and in other sea-terms. Every pitcher was a 'galon' (Mark xiv. 13, Wiclif), while a 'peck' was no more than a 'poke' or bag. And the same has taken place in all other languages. The Greek 'drachm' was at first a handful.¹ The word which stood at a later day for ten thousand (μύριοι), implied in Homer's time any great multitude; and, differently accented, retained this vaguer meaning in the later periods of the language.

Over against this is a counter-process by which words of narrower intention gradually enlarge their domain of meaning, becoming capable of much wider application than any which once they admitted. Instances in this kind are fewer than in the last. The main stream and course of human thoughts and human discourse tends the other way, to discerning, distinguishing, dividing; and then to the permanent fixing of the distinctions gained, by the aid of designations which shall keep apart for ever in word that which has been once severed and sundered in thought. Nor is it hard to perceive why this process should be the more frequent. Men are first struck with the likeness between those things which are presented to them; on the strength of which likeness they mentally bracket them under a common term. Further acquaintance reveals their points of unlikeness, the real dissimilarities which lurk under superficial resemblances, the need therefore of a different notation for objects which are essentially different. It is compa-

¹ Δραχμή = 'manipulus,' from δράσσομαι, to grasp as much as one can hold in the fingers.

ratively much rarer to discover real likeness under what at first appeared as unlikeness ; and usually when a word moves forward, and from a special acquires a general significance, it is not in obedience to any such discovery of the true inner likeness of things, — the steps of successful generalizations being marked and secured in other ways—but this widening of a word's meaning is too often a result of quite other causes. Men forget a word's history and etymology ; its distinctive features are obliterated for them, with all which attached it to some thought or fact which by right was its own. All words in some sort are faded metaphors, but this is one in which the fading has become absolute and complete. Appropriated and restricted once to some striking speciality which it vigorously set out, it can now be used in a wider, vaguer, more indefinite way. It can be employed twenty times for once when it would have been possible formerly to employ it. Yet this is not gain, but pure loss. It has lost its place in the disciplined *army* of words, and become one of a loose and disorderly *mob*.¹

Let me instance 'preposterous.' It is now no longer of any practical service at all in the language, being merely an ungraceful and slipshod synonym for absurd. But restore and confine it to its proper use ; let it designate that one peculiar branch of absurdity which it designated once, namely the reversing of the

¹ The exact opposite of this will sometimes take place. Beaucoup de mots, qui du temps de Corneille se pliaient à plusieurs significations, se sont, de la façon la plus bizarre, immobilisés et pétrifiés, si l'on ose le dire, dans des sens étroits et restreints (*Lexique de la Langue de Corneille*, p. xxii.).

true order of things, the putting of the last first, and, by consequence, of the first last, and what excellent service it would yield. Thus it is 'preposterous' to put the cart before the horse, to expect wages before the work is done, to hang a man first and try him afterwards ; and in this stricter sense 'preposterous' was always used by our elder writers.

In like manner 'to prevaricate' was never employed by good writers of the seventeenth century without nearer or more remote allusion to the uses of the word in the Roman law-courts, where a 'prævaricator' (properly a straddler with distorted legs) did not mean generally and loosely, as now with us, one who shuffles, quibbles, and evades ; but one who played false in a particular manner ; who, undertaking, or being by his office bound, to prosecute a charge, was in secret collusion with the opposite party ; and, betraying the cause which he affected to support, so managed the accusation as to obtain not the condemnation, but the acquittal, of the accused ; in short, a 'feint pleader,' as in our old law language he would have been termed. How much force would the keeping of this in mind add to many passages in our elder divines.

Or take 'equivocal,' 'equivocate,' 'equivocation.' These words, which belonged at first to logic, have slipped into common use, and in so doing have lost all the precision of their first employment. 'Equivocation' is now almost any such ambiguous dealing in words with the intention of deceiving, as falls short of an actual lie ; but according to etymology and in primary use 'equivocation,' this fruitful mother of so much error, is the calling by the same name, of things

essentially diverse, hiding intentionally or otherwise a real difference under a verbal resemblance.¹ Nor let it be urged in defence of the present looser use, that only so could it serve the needs of our ordinary conversation ; so far from this, had it retained its first use, how serviceable an implement of thought might it have been in detecting our own fallacies, or those of others ; all which it can now be no longer.

What now is 'idea' for us? How infinite the fall of this word since the time when Milton sang of the Creator contemplating his newly-created world,

'how it showed,
Answering his great *idea*,

to the present use, when this person 'has an *idea* that the train has started,' and the other 'had no *idea* that the dinner would be so bad.' But 'idea' is perhaps the worst treated word in the English language. Matters have not mended since the times of Dr. Johnson ; who, as Boswell tells us, 'was particularly indignant against the almost universal use of the word *idea* in the sense of *notion* or *opinion*, when it is clear that *idea* can only signify something of which an image can be formed in the mind.' There is perhaps no word in the whole compass of the language so seldom employed with any tolerable correctness ; in none is the distance so immense between what properly it means, and the slovenly uses which popularly it is made to serve.

This tendency in words to lose the sharp, rigidly

¹ Thus Barrow : 'Which [courage and constancy] he that wanteth is no other than *equivocally* a gentleman, as an image or a carcass is a man.'

defined outline of meaning which they once possessed, to become of wide, vague, loose application instead of fixed, definite, and precise, to mean almost anything, and so really to mean nothing, is among the most fatally effectual which are at work for the final ruin of a language, and, I do not fear to add, for the demoralization of those that speak it. It is one against which we shall all do well to watch ; for there is none of us who cannot do something in keeping words close to their own proper meaning, and in resisting their encroachment on the domain of others.

The causes which bring this mischief about are not hard to trace. We all know that when a piece of our silver money has for a long time been fulfilling its part as 'pale and common drudge 'tween man and man,' whatever it had at first of sharper outline and livelier impress is in the end nearly or altogether worn away. So it is with words, above all with words of theology and science. These, getting into general use, and passing often from mouth to mouth, lose the 'image and superscription' which they had, before they descended from the school to the market-place, from the pulpit to the street. Being now caught up by those who understand imperfectly and thus incorrectly their true value, who will not be at the pains of learning what that is, or who are incapable of so doing, they are obliged to accommodate themselves to the lower sphere in which they circulate, by laying aside much of the precision and accuracy and fulness which once they had ; they become weaker, shallower, more indistinct ; till in the end, as true or adequate exponents of thought and feeling, they cease to be of any service at all.

Sometimes a word does not merely narrow or extend its meaning, but altogether changes it ; and this it does in more ways than one. Thus a secondary figurative sense will quite put out of use and extinguish the literal, until in the entire predominance of that it is altogether forgotten that it ever possessed any other. In 'bombast' this forgetfulness is nearly complete. What 'bombast' now means is familiar to us all, namely inflated words, 'full of sound and fury,' but 'signifying nothing.' This, at present the sole meaning, was once only the secondary and superinduced ; 'bombast' being properly the cotton plant, and then the cotton wadding with which garments were stuffed out and lined. You remember perhaps how Prince Hal addresses Falstaff, 'How now, my sweet creature of *bombast*;' using the word in its literal sense ; and another early poet has this line :

'Thy body's bolstered out with *bombast* and with bags.'

'Bombast' was then transferred in a vigorous image to the big words without substance or solidity where-with the discourses of some were stuffed out, and has now quite forgone any other meaning. So too 'to garble' was once 'to cleanse from dross and dirt, as grocers do their spices, to pick or cull out.'¹ It is never used now in this its primary sense, and has indeed undergone this further change, that while once 'to garble' was to sift for the purpose of selecting the best, it is now to sift with a view of picking out the worst.² 'Polite' is another word which in the figurative

¹ Phillips, *New World of Words*, 1706.

² 'But his [Gideon's] army must be *garbled*, as too great for God to give victory thereby ; all the fearful return home by proclamation' (Fuller, *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, b. ii. c. 8).

sense has quite extinguished the literal. We still speak of 'polished' surfaces ; but not any more, with Cudworth, of '*polite* bodies, as looking-glasses.' Neither do we now 'exonerate' a ship (Burton) ; nor 'stigmatize,' otherwise than figuratively, a 'malefactor' (the same) ; nor 'corroborate' our health (Sir Thomas Elyot) any more.

Again, a word will travel on by slow and regularly progressive courses of change, itself a faithful index of changes going on in society and in the minds of men, till at length everything is changed about it. The process of this it is often very curious to observe ; being one which it is possible to watch as step by step it advances to the final consummation. There may be said to be three leading phases which the word successively presents, three stages in its history. At first it grows naturally out of its own root, is filled with its own natural meaning. Presently it allows another meaning, one foreign to its etymology, and superinduced on the earlier, to share possession with this, on the ground that where one exists, the other commonly exists with it. At the third step, the newly introduced meaning, not satisfied with a moiety, with dividing the possession of the word, has thrust out the original and rightful possessor altogether, and reigns henceforward alone. The three successive stages may be represented by *a*, *ab*, *b* ; in which series *b*, which was wanting altogether at the first stage, and was only admitted as secondary at the second, does at the third become primary, and indeed remains in sole and exclusive possession.

We must not suppose that in actual fact the transitions from one signification to another are so

strongly and distinctly marked, as I have found it convenient to mark them here. Indeed it is hard to imagine anything more gradual, more subtle and imperceptible, than the process of change. The manner in which the new meaning first insinuates itself into the old, and then drives out the old, can only be compared to the process of petrification, as rightly understood—the water not gradually turning what has fallen into it to stone, as we generally take the operation to be ; but successively displacing each several particle of that which is brought within its power, and depositing a stony particle in its stead, till, in the end, while all appears to continue the same, all has in fact been thoroughly changed. It is precisely thus, by such slow, gradual, and subtle advances that the new meaning filters through and pervades the word, little by little displacing entirely that which it formerly possessed.

No word would illustrate this process better than that old example, familiar probably to us all, of ‘villain.’ The ‘villain’ is, first, the serf or peasant, ‘villanus,’ because attached to the ‘villa’ or farm. He is, secondly, the peasant who, it is further taken for granted, will be churlish, selfish, dishonest, and generally of evil moral conditions, these having come to be assumed as always belonging to him, and to be permanently associated with his name, by those higher classes of society, the καλοὶ καγαθοί, who in the main commanded the springs of language. At the third step, nothing of the meaning which the etymology suggests, nothing of ‘villa,’ survives any longer ; the peasant is wholly dismissed, and the evil moral conditions of him who is called by this name alone

remain ;¹ so that the name would now in this its final stage be applied as freely to peer, if he deserved it, as to peasant. 'Boor' has had exactly the same history ; being first the cultivator of the soil ; then secondly, the cultivator of the soil who, it is assumed, will be coarse, rude, and unmannerly ; and then thirdly, any one who is coarse, rude, and unmannerly. So too 'pagan ;' which is first villager, then heathen villager, and lastly heathen.² You may trace the same progress in 'churl,' 'clown,' 'antic,' and in numerous other words. The intrusive meaning might be likened in all these cases to the egg which the cuckoo lays in the sparrow's nest ; the young cuckoo first sharing the nest with its rightful occupants, but not resting till it has dislodged and ousted them altogether.

I will illustrate by the aid of one word more this part of my subject. I called your attention in my last lecture to the true character of several words and forms in use among our country people, and claimed for them to be in many instances genuine English, although English now more or less antiquated and overlived. 'Gossip' is a word in point. This name is given by our Hampshire peasantry to the sponsors in baptism, the godfathers and godmothers. We have here a perfectly correct employment of 'gossip,' in fact its proper and original one, one involving more-

¹ Epigrams and proverbs like the following, and they are innumerable in the Middle Ages, sufficiently explain the successive phases of meaning through which 'villain' has passed :

Quando mulcetur villanus, pejor habetur :
Ungentem pungit, pungentem rusticus ungit.

² See my *Study of Words*, 14th edit., p. 123.

over a very curious record of past beliefs. 'Gossip' or 'gossib,' as Chaucer spelt it, is a compound word, made up of the name of 'God,' and of an old English word, 'sib,' still alive in Scotland, as all readers of Walter Scott will remember, and in some parts of England, and which means, akin; they being 'sib' who are related to one another. But why, you may ask, was the name given to sponsors? Out of this reason;—in the Middle Ages it was the prevailing belief (and the Romish Church still affirms it), that those who stood as sponsors to the same child, besides contracting spiritual obligations on behalf of that child, also contracted spiritual affinity one with another; they became *sib*, or akin, in *God*, and thus 'gossips;' hence 'gossipred,' an old word, exactly analogous to 'kindred.' Out of this faith the Roman Catholic Church will not allow (unless by dispensation) those who have stood as sponsors to the same child, afterwards to contract marriage with one another, affirming them too nearly related for this to be lawful.

Take 'gossip,' however, in its ordinary present use, as one addicted to idle tittle-tattle, and it seems to bear no relation whatever to its etymology and first meaning. The same three steps, however, which we have traced before will bring us to its present use. 'Gossips' are, first, the sponsors, brought by the act of a common sponsorship into affinity and near familiarity with one another; secondly, these sponsors, who being thus brought together, allow themselves with one another in familiar, and then in trivial and idle, talk; thirdly, they are any who allow themselves in this trivial and idle talk,—called in French '*com-mérage*,' from the fact that '*commère*' has run

through exactly the same stages as its English equivalent.

It is plain that words which designate not things and persons only, but these as they are contemplated more or less in an ethical light, words which are tinged with a moral sentiment, are peculiarly exposed to change; are constantly liable to take a new colouring, or to lose an old. The gauge and measure of praise or blame, honour or dishonour, admiration or abhorrence, which they imply, is so purely a mental and subjective one, that it is most difficult to take accurate note of its rise or of its fall, while yet there are causes continually at work to bring about the one or the other. There are words not a few, ethical words above all, which have so imperceptibly drifted away from their former moorings, that although their position is now very different from that which they once occupied, scarcely one in a hundred of casual readers, whose attention has not been specially called to the subject, will have observed that they have moved at all. Here too we observe some words conveying less of praise or blame than once, and some more; while some have wholly shifted from the one to the other. Some were at one time words of slight, almost of offence, which have altogether ceased to be so now. Still these are rare by comparison with those which once were harmless, but now are harmless no more; which once, it may be, were terms of honour, but which now imply a slight or even a scorn. It is only too easy to perceive why these should exceed those in number.

Let us take an example or two. To speak now of royal children as '*royal imps*,' would sound, and ac-

according to our present usage would be, impertinent; and yet 'imp' was once a name of dignity and honour, and not of slight or of undue familiarity. Thus Spenser addresses the Muses,

'Ye sacred *imps* that on Parnasso dwell;'

and 'imp' was especially used of the scions of royal or illustrious houses. More than one epitaph, still existing, of our ancient nobility might be quoted, beginning in such language as this, 'Here lies that noble *imp*.' Or what should we say of a poet who commenced a solemn poem in this fashion,

'Oh Israel, oh household of the Lord,
Oh Abraham's *brats*, oh brood of blessed seed'?

Could we conclude but that he meant, by using low words on lofty occasions, to turn sacred things into ridicule? Yet this was very far from the intention of Gascoigne, the poet whose lines I have just quoted. 'Abraham's *brats*' was used by him in perfect good faith, and without the slightest feeling that anything ludicrous or contemptuous adhered to 'brat,' as indeed in his time there did not, any more than now adheres to 'brood,' which is another form of the same word now.

Call a person 'pragmatical,' and you now imply not merely that he is busy, but *over*-busy, officious, self-important and pompous to boot. But it once meant nothing of the kind, and a man 'pragmatical' (like *πραγματικός*) was one engaged in affairs, and the title an honourable one, given to a man simply and industriously accomplishing the business which properly

concerned him.¹ So too to say that a person 'meddles' or is a 'meddler' implies now that he interferes unduly in other men's matters, without a call mixing himself up with these. This was not insinuated in the earlier uses of the word. On the contrary, three of our earlier translations of the Bible have, '*Meddle with your own business*' (1 Thess. iv. 11); and Barrow in one of his sermons draws at some length the distinction between 'meddling' and 'being *meddlesome*,' and only condemns the latter.

Or take again the words, 'to prose' or a 'proser.' It cannot indeed be affirmed that they involve any *moral* condemnation, yet they certainly convey no compliment now; and are almost among the last which any one would desire should with justice be applied either to his talking or his writing. For 'to prose,' as we all now know too well, is to talk or write heavily and tediously, without spirit or animation; but once it was simply the antithesis of to versify, and a 'proser' the antithesis of a versifier or a poet. It will follow that the most rapid and liveliest writer who ever wrote, if he did not write in verse would have 'prosed' and been a 'proser,' in the language of our ancestors. Thus Drayton writes of his contemporary Nashe:

'And surely Nashe, though he a *proser* were,
A branch of laurel yet deserves to bear,'

that is, the ornament not of a 'proser,' but of a poet. The tacit assumption that vigour, animation, rapid

¹ 'We cannot always be contemplative, or *pragmatical* abroad: but have need of some delightful intermissions, wherein the enlarged soul may leave off awhile her severe schooling' (Milton, *Tetrachordon*).

movement, with all the precipitation of the spirit, belong to verse rather than to prose, and are the exclusive possession of it, must explain the changed uses of the word.

Still it is according to a word's present signification that we must employ it now. It would be no excuse, having applied an insulting epithet to any, if we should afterwards plead that, tried by its etymology and primary usage, it had nothing offensive or insulting about it; although indeed Swift assures us that in his time such a plea was made and was allowed. 'I remember,' he says, 'at a trial in Kent, where Sir George Rooke was indicted for calling a gentleman "knave" and "villain," the lawyer for the defendant brought off his client by alledging that the words were not injurious; for "knave" in the old and true signification imported only a servant; and "villain" in Latin is *villicus*, which is no more than a man employed in country labour, or rather a baily.' The lawyer may have deserved his success for the ingenuity and boldness of his plea; though, if Swift reports him aright, not certainly on the ground of the strict accuracy either of his Early English or his Latin.

The moral sense and conviction of men is often at work upon their words, giving them new turns in obedience to these convictions, of which their changed use will then remain a permanent record. The history of 'sycophant' will illustrate this. You probably are acquainted with the story which the Greek scholiasts invented by way of explaining a word of whose history they knew nothing,—namely that the 'sycophant' was a 'manifestor of figs,' one who detected and denounced others in the act of exporting figs from

Attica, an act forbidden, they asserted, by the Athenian law ; and accused them to the people. Be this explanation worth what it may, the word obtained in Greek a more general sense ; any accuser, and then any *false* accuser, was a ‘sycophant ;’ and when the word was first adopted into English, it was in this meaning : thus an old poet speaks of ‘the railing route of *sycophants* ;’ and Holland : ‘The poor man that hath nought to lose, is not afraid of the *sycophant*.’ But it has not kept this meaning ; a ‘sycophant’ is now a fawning flatterer ; not one who speaks ill of you behind your back ; rather one who speaks good of you before your face, but good which he does not in his heart believe. Yet how true a moral instinct has presided over this changed signification. The calumniator and the flatterer, although they seem so opposed to one another, how closely united they really are. They grow out of the same root. The same baseness of spirit which shall lead one to speak evil of you behind your back, will lead him to fawn on you and flatter you before your face. There is a profound sense in that Italian proverb, ‘Who flatters me before, spatters me behind.’

But it is not the moral sense only of men which is thus at work, modifying their words ; but the immoral as well. If the good which men have and feel, penetrates into their speech, and leaves its deposit there, so does also the evil. Thus we may trace a constant tendency—in too many cases it has been a successful one—to empty words employed in the condemnation of evil, of the depth and earnestness of the moral reprobation which they once conveyed. Men’s too easy toleration of sin, the feebleness of their moral

indignation against it, brings this about, namely that the blame which words expressed once, has in some of them become much weaker now than once, from others has vanished altogether. 'To do a *shrewd* turn,' was once to do a *wicked* turn; Chaucer employs 'shrewdness' to render the Latin 'improbitas;' nay, two murderers he calls two 'shrews,'—for there were, as has been already noticed, male 'shrews' once as well as female. But 'a *shrewd* turn' now, while it implies a certain amount of sharp dealing, yet implies nothing more; and 'shrewdness' is applied to men rather in their praise than in their dispraise. And not these only, but a multitude of other words,—I will only instance 'flirt,' 'loiterer,' 'luxury,' 'luxurious,' 'peevish,' 'prank,' 'uncivil,' 'wayward,'—involved once a much more earnest moral disapprobation than they do at this present.

But I must bring this lecture to a close. I have but opened to you paths, which you, if you are so minded, can follow up for yourselves. We have learned lately to speak of men's 'antecedents;' the phrase is newly come up; and it is common to say that if we would know what a man really now is, we must know his 'antecedents,' that is, what he has been and what he has done in time past. This is quite as true about words. If we would know what they now are, we must know what they have been; we must know, if possible, the date and place of their birth, the successive stages of their subsequent history, the company which they have kept, all the road which they have travelled, and what has brought them to the point at which now we find them; we must know, in short, their antecedents.

And let me say, without attempting to bring back school into these lectures which are out of school, that, seeking to do this, we might add an interest to our researches in the lexicon and the dictionary which otherwise they could never have; that taking such words, for example, as ἐκκλησία,¹ or παλιγγενεσία,¹ or εὐτραπελία,¹ or σοφιστής, or σχολαστικός, in Greek; as 'religio,' or 'sacramentum,' or 'imperator,'² or 'urbanitas,' or 'superstitio,' in Latin; as 'casuistry,' or 'good-nature,' or 'humorous,' or 'danger,' or 'romance,' in English, and endeavouring to trace the manner in which one meaning grew out of and superseded another, and how they arrived at that use in which they have finally rested (if indeed before these English words there be not a future still), we shall derive, I believe, amusement, I am sure, instruction; we shall feel that we are really getting something, increasing the moral and intellectual stores of our minds; furnishing ourselves with that which may hereafter be of service to ourselves, may be of service to others—than which there can be no feeling more pleasurable, none more delightful.³

¹ See my *Synonyms of the New Testament*, s. v.v.

² See Merivale, *History of the Romans*, vol. iii. p. 440 sqq.

³ For a fuller treatment of the subject of this lecture, see my *Select Glossary*, 4th edit., 1873.

LECTURE VIII.

CHANGES IN THE SPELLING OF ENGLISH WORDS.

THE subject of my lecture to-day will be English orthography, and it will be mainly taken up with notices of some changes which this has undergone. You may think perhaps that a weightier, or at all events a more interesting, subject might have claimed our attention. But it is indeed a subject wanting neither in importance nor in interest. Unimportant it is not, having often engaged the attention of the foremost scholars among us. Uninteresting it may be, through faults in the manner of its treatment; but would never prove so in competent hands.¹ Let me hope that even in mine it may yield some pleasure and profit.

It is Hobbes who has said, 'The invention of printing, though ingenious, compared with the invention of letters, is no great matter.' Use and familiarity had not obliterated for him the wonder of that, at which we probably have long ceased to wonder, if indeed the marvel of it ever presented itself to our

¹ Let me refer, in proof, to a paper, *On Orthographical Expedients*, by Edwin Guest, Esq., in the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, vol. iii. p. i.

minds at all—the power, namely, of representing sounds by written signs, of reproducing for the eye what existed at first only for the ear. Nor was the estimate which he formed of the relative value of these two inventions other than a just one. Writing stands more nearly on a level with speaking, and deserves better to be compared with it, than with printing ; which last, with all its utility, is yet of quite another and inferior type of greatness : or, if this be too much to claim for writing, it may at all events be affirmed to stand midway between the other two, and to be as much superior to the one as it is inferior to the other.

The intention of the written word, the end whereto it is a mean, is by aid of signs agreed on beforehand, to represent to the eye with as much accuracy as possible the spoken word. This intention, however, it never fulfils completely. There is always a chasm between these two, and much going forward in a language to render this chasm ever wider and wider. Short as man's spoken word often falls of his thought, his written word falls often as short of his spoken. Several causes contribute to this. In the first place, the marks of imperfection and infirmity cleave to writing, as to every other invention of man. It fares with most alphabets as with our own. They have superfluous letters, letters which they do not want, because others already represent their sound ; thus 'q' in English is perfectly useless ; 'c' 'k' and 's' have only two sounds between them. They have dubious letters, such, that is, as say nothing certain about the sounds they stand for, because more than one sound is represented by them, our own 'a' for

example. They are deficient in letters, that is, the language has elementary sounds such as our own 'th' which have no corresponding letters appropriated to them, and can only be represented by combinations of letters. This then, being, as one called it long ago, 'an appendix to the curse of Babel,' is one reason of the imperfect reproduction of the spoken word by the written. But another is, that the human voice is so wonderfully fine and flexible an organ, is able to mark such subtle and delicate distinctions of sound, so infinitely to modify and vary these sounds, that were an alphabet complete as human art could make it, did it possess twice as many letters as our own possesses,—the Sanscrit, which has fifty, very nearly does so,—there would still remain a multitude of sounds which it could only approximately give back.

But there is a further cause for the divergence which little by little becomes apparent between men's spoken words and their written. What men do often, they will seek to do with the least possible trouble. There is nothing which they do oftener than utter words; they will seek here then to save themselves pains; they will contract two or more syllables into one; 'vuestra merced' will become 'usted;' and 'topside the other way,' 'topsy-turvy;'¹ or draw two or three syllables together, 'itiner' will become 'iter,' 'hafoc' 'hawk,' 'cyning' 'king,' and 'almesse' 'alms;' they will assimilate consonants, 'subfero' will become 'suffero;' they will slur over, and thus after a while cease to pronounce, certain letters, especially at the close of words, where the speaking effort has in a

¹ See *Stanihurst's Ireland*, p. 33, in *Holinshed's Chronicles*.

manner exhausted itself ; for hard letters they will substitute soft ; for those which require a certain effort to pronounce, they will substitute those which require little or almost none.¹ Under the operation of these causes a gulf between the written and spoken word will not merely exist ; but it will have the tendency to grow ever wider and wider. This tendency indeed will be partially traversed by approximations which from time to time will by silent consent be made of the written word to the spoken ; absolutely superfluous letters will be got rid of ; as the final 'k' in 'civic,' 'politic,' and such like words ; the 'Engleneloande' of Henry the Third's famous proclamation (1258) will become the 'England' which we now write, seven letters instead of thirteen ; here

¹ Schleicher (*Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 49): Alle Veränderung der Laute, die im Verlaufe des sprachlichen Lebens eintritt, ist zunächst und unmittelbar Folge des Strebens, unseren Sprachorganen die Sache leicht zu machen. Bequemlichkeit der Aussprache, Ersparung an Muskelthätigkeit ist das hier wirkende Agens. Who does not feel, for instance, how much the *mêteres* of Greek, with its thrice recurring 'e,' has gained in facility of being spoken over the earlier *mâtaras*, with its thrice recurring 'a,' of the Sanscrit? Ampère (*Formation de la Langue Française*) describes well the forces, and this among the rest, which are ever at work for the final destruction of a language: Les mots en vieillissant, tendent à remplacer les consonnes fortes et dures par des consonnes faibles et douces, les voyelles sonores, d'abord par des voyelles sourdes, puis par des voyelles muettes. Les sons pleins s'éteignent peu à peu et se perdent. Les finales disparaissent et les mots se contractent. Par suite, les langues deviennent moins mélodieuses ; les mots qui charmaient et remplissaient l'oreille n'offrent plus qu'un signe mnémonique, et comme un chiffre. Les langues en général commencent par être une musique et finissent par être une algèbre.

and there a letter dropped in speech will be dropped also in writing, as the 's' in so many French words, where its absence is marked by a circumflex ; a new shape, contracted or briefer, which a word has taken on the lips of men, will find its representation in their writing ; as 'chirurgion' will not merely be pronounced, but also spelt, 'surgeon,' 'squiancy' 'quinsy,' and 'Eoforwic,' or 'Euerwic,' 'York.' Still, notwithstanding these partial readjustments of the relations between the two, the anomalies will be infinite ; there will be a multitude of written letters which have ceased to be sounded letters ; words not a few will exist in one shape upon our lips, and in quite another in our books. Sometimes, as in such proper names as 'Beauchamp' and 'Belvoir,' even the pretence of a consent between the written word and the spoken will have been abandoned.

It is inevitable that the question should arise—Shall these anomalies be meddled with? shall it be attempted to remove them, and to bring writing and speech into harmony and consent—a harmony and consent which never indeed in actual fact at any period of the language existed, but which yet may be regarded as the object of written speech, as the idea which, however imperfectly realized, has, in the reduction of spoken sounds to written, floated before the minds of men? If the attempt is to be made, it is clear that it can only be made in one way. There is not the alternative here that either Mahomet shall go to the mountain, *or* the mountain to Mahomet. The spoken word is the mountain ; it will not stir ; it will resist all attempts to move it. Conscious of superior rights, that it existed the first, that it is, so to

say, the elder brother, it will never consent to become different from what it has been, that so it may more closely conform and comply with the written word. Men will not be persuaded to pronounce 'would' and 'debt,' because they write these words severally with an 'l' and with a 'b': but what if they could be induced to write 'woud' and 'det,' because they so pronounce; and to adopt the same course wherever a discrepancy exists between the word as spoken, and as written? Might not the gulf between the two be in this way made to disappear?

Here we have the explanation of that which in the history of almost all literatures has repeated itself more than once, namely, the endeavour to introduce phonetic writing. It has certain plausibilities to rest on; it appeals to the unquestionable fact that the written word was intended to picture to the eye what the spoken word sounded in the ear. For all this I believe that it would be impossible to introduce it; and, even if possible, that it would be most undesirable, and this for two reasons: the first being that the losses consequent upon its introduction would far outweigh the gains, even supposing those gains as large as the advocates of the scheme promise; the second, that these promised gains would themselves be only very partially realized, or not at all.

I believe it to be impossible. It is clear that such a scheme must begin with the reconstruction of the alphabet. The first thing that the phonographers have perceived is the necessity for the creation of a vast number of new signs, the poverty of all existing alphabets, at any rate of our own, not yielding a several sign for all the several sounds in the language.

Our English phonographers have therefore had to invent ten of these new signs or letters, which are henceforth to take their place with our 'a, b, c,' and to enjoy equal rights with them. Rejecting two ('q,' 'x'), and adding ten, they have raised their alphabet from twenty-six letters to thirty-four. But to procure the reception of such a reconstructed alphabet is simply an impossibility, as much an impossibility as would be the reconstitution of the structure of the language in any points where it was manifestly deficient or illogical. Sciolists or scholars may sit down in their studies, and devise these new letters, and prove that we need them, and that the introduction of them would be a manifest gain; and this may be all very true: but if they imagine that they can persuade a people to adopt them, they know little of the ways in which its alphabet is entwined with the whole innermost life of a people.¹ One may freely own that most present alphabets are redundant here, are deficient there; our English is as greatly at fault as any, perhaps is the most faulty of all,² and with that we have chiefly

¹ Of course it is quite a different thing when philologists, for their own special purposes, endeavour to construct an alphabet which shall cover all sounds of human speech, and shall enable them to communicate to one another in all parts of the world what is the true pronunciation, or what they believe to be true pronunciation, of the words with which they are dealing. But alphabets like these are purely scientific, and must remain such. A single fact will sufficiently prove this. The *Standard Alphabet* of the German scholar Lepsius, intended, it is true, to furnish written equivalents for sounds, not of one human speech, but of all, has two hundred and eighty-six signs, every one of them having a distinct phonetic value.

² See Latham, *Defence of Phonetic Spelling*, passim.

to do. Unquestionably it has more letters than one to express one and the same sound ; it has only one letter to express two or three sounds ; it has sounds which are only capable of being expressed at all by awkward and roundabout expedients. Yet at the same time we must accept the fact, as we accept any other which it is out of our power to change—with regret indeed, but with a perfect acquiescence : as one accepts the fact that Ireland is not some thirty or forty miles nearer to England—that it is so difficult to get round Cape Horn—that the climate of Africa is so fatal to European life. A people will no more quit their alphabet than they will quit their language, they will no more consent to modify the one at a command from without than the other. Cæsar avowed that with all his power he could not introduce a new word, and certainly Claudius could not introduce a new letter. Centuries may bring about and sanction the introduction of a new one, or the dropping of an old. But to imagine that it is possible suddenly to introduce a group of ten new letters, as these reformers propose¹—they might just as feasibly propose that the English language should form its comparatives and superlatives on some entirely new scheme, say in Greek fashion, by the terminations ‘oteros’ and ‘otatos ;’ or that we should agree to set up a dual ; or that our substantives should return to our Anglo-Saxon declensions. Any one of these or like proposals would not betray a whit more ignorance of the eternal laws which regulate human speech, and of the

¹ These must, in some sense, be not ten, but forty ; for in each case there must be a capital letter and a smaller, a letter for printing and a letter for writing.

limits within which deliberate action upon it is possible, than does this of increasing our alphabet by ten entirely novel signs.

But grant it possible, grant our six and twenty letters to have so little sacredness in them that Englishmen would endure a crowd of upstart interlopers to mix themselves on an equal footing with them, still this could only arise from a sense of the greatness of the advantage to be derived from this introduction. Now the vast advantage claimed by the advocates of the system is, that it would facilitate the learning to read, and wholly save the labour of learning to spell, which 'on the present plan occupies,' as they assure us, 'at the very lowest calculation from three to five years.' Spelling, it is said, would no longer need to be learned at all ; since whoever knew the sound would necessarily know also the spelling, these being in all cases in perfect conformity with one another. The anticipation of this gain rests upon two assumptions which are tacitly taken for granted, but both of them erroneous.

The first of these assumptions is, that all men pronounce all words alike, and thus that, whenever they come to spell a word, they will exactly agree as to what the outline of its sound is. Now we are sure men will not do this from the fact that, before there was any fixed and settled orthography in our language, when therefore everybody was more or less a phonographer, seeking to write down the word as it sounded *to him*, (for he had no other law to guide him), the variations of spelling were infinite. Take, for instance, the word 'sudden ;' which does not seem to promise any great scope for variety. I have myself met with

this word spelt in the following sixteen ways among our early writers : 'sodain,' 'sodaine,' 'sodan,' 'sodane,' 'sodayne,' 'sodden,' 'sodein,' 'sodeine,' 'soden,' 'sodeyn,' 'suddain,' 'suddaine,' 'suddein,' 'suddeine,' 'sudden,' 'sudeyn.' Shakespeare's name is spelt I know not in how many ways, and Raleigh's in hardly fewer. The same fact is evident from the spelling of uneducated persons in our own day. They have no other rule but the sound to guide them. How is it that they do not all spell alike ; erroneously, it may be, as having only the sound for their guide, but still falling all into exactly the same errors ? What is the actual fact ? They not merely spell wrongly, which might be laid to the charge of our perverse system of spelling, but with an inexhaustible diversity of error, and that too in the case of simplest words. Thus the town of Woburn would seem to give small room for caprice in spelling, while yet the postmaster there has made, from the superscription of letters that have passed through his hands, a collection of two hundred and forty-four varieties of ways in which the place has been spelt.¹ It may be replied that these were all or nearly all collected from the letters of the ignorant and uneducated. Exactly so ;—but it is for their sakes, and to place them on a level with the educated, or rather to accelerate their education by the omission of a discipline as troublesome as it is useless, that the change is proposed. I wish to show you that after the change they would be just as much, or almost as much, at a loss in their spelling as now.

Another reason would make it quite as necessary

¹ *Notes and Queries*, No. 147.

then to learn orthography as now. Pronunciation, as I have already noticed, is oftentimes far too subtle a thing to be more than approximated to, and indicated in the written letter. Different persons would attempt by different methods to overcome the difficulties which the reproduction of it for the eye presented, and thus different spellings would arise ; or, if not so, one must be arbitrarily selected, and would have need to be learned, just as much as spelling at present has need to be learned. I will only ask you, in proof of this which I affirm, to turn to any Pronouncing Dictionary. When you mark the elaborate and yet ineffectual artifices by which it toils after the finer distinctions of articulation, seeks to reproduce in letters what exists, and can only exist, as the spoken tradition of pronunciation, acquired from lip to lip by the organ of the ear, capable of being learned, but incapable of being taught ; or when you compare two of these Dictionaries with one another, and note the entirely different schemes and combinations of letters which they employ for representing the same sound to the eye ; you will then perceive how futile the attempt to make the written in language commensurate with the sounded ; you will own that not merely out of human caprice, ignorance, or indolence, the former falls short of and differs from the latter ; but that this lies in the necessity of things, in the fact that man's *voice* can effect so much more than ever his *letter* can.¹ You will then perceive that there would be as much, or nearly as much, of arbitrary in spelling which calls itself phonetic as there is in our present. We should

¹ See Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, Croker's edit., 1848, p. 233.

be as little able to dismiss the spelling card then as now. But to what extent English writing would be transformed—whether for the better or the worse each may judge for himself—a single specimen will prove. Take as the first sample which comes to my hand these four lines of Pope, which hitherto we have thus spelt and read,

‘ But errs not nature from this gracious end,
From burning suns when livid deaths descend,
When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests sweep
Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?’

Phonetically written, they present themselves to us in the following fashion :

‘ But ɜ erz not natiur from ðis græcɪs end,
from bɜrniŋ sʊnz when livid deðs disend,
when ɛrðkwɛks swolə, or when tempests swip
təʊnz tʊ wʊn grɛv, həl nəʊns tʊ ðe di:p.’

This however is but a mild specimen of the transformation which our written language will undergo. I take the following from the most recent, as it is also the ablest, and most learned, defence of phonetic spelling which has appeared :

Ser Bulwer Lytton sez:—‘ A mɔr lɪŋ, pɔzəl-hedəd deluʒən ðan ðæt bɪ whɪg wɪ kɒnfʊz ðe klɪr ɪnstɪŋkts ɒv truθ ɪn ɔr əkɔrsəd sɪstəm ɒv speliŋ wɒz nəvɜ kɒŋkɒktəd bɪ ðe fɑðɜ ɒv fɔlʃhʊd. Həʊ kən ə sɪstəm ɒv edʊkəʃən flɔrɪʃ ðæt beɪnɪz bɪ sɜ mɒnstɪs ə fɔlʃhʊd, whɪg ðe sɛns ɒv hɪrɪŋ sɛfɪzɪz tʊ kɒntrədɪkt?’

The scheme would not then fulfil its promises. The gains which it vaunts, when we come to look closely at them, disappear. And now for the losses. There are

in every language a vast number of words, which the ear does not distinguish from one another, but which are at once distinguishable to the eye by the spelling. I will only instance a few which are the same parts of speech ; thus 'sun' and 'son ;' 'virge' ('virga,' now obsolete) and 'verge ;' 'reign,' 'rain,' and 'rein ;' 'hair' and 'hare ;' 'plate' and 'plait ;' 'moat' and 'mote ;' 'pear' and 'pair ;' 'pain' and 'pane ;' 'raise' and 'raze ;' 'air' and 'heir ;' 'ark' and 'arc ;' 'mite' and 'might ;' 'pour' and 'pore ;' 'tail' and 'tale ;' 'veil' and 'vale ;' 'knight' and 'night ;' 'knave' and 'nave ;' 'pier' and 'peer ;' 'rite' and 'right ;' 'site' and 'sight ;' 'aisle' and 'isle ;' 'concent' and 'consent ;' 'signet' and 'cygnet.' Now, of course, it is a real disadvantage, and may be the cause of serious confusion, that there should be words in our spoken language of entirely different origin and meaning, which yet cannot in sound be differenced from one another. The phonographers simply propose to extend this disadvantage already cleaving to our spoken, to the written language as well. It is fault enough in the French language that 'mère' a mother, 'mer' the sea, 'maire' a mayor of a town, should have no perceptible difference between them in the spoken tongue ; or again that there should be nothing to distinguish 'sans,' 'sang,' 'sent,' 'sens,' 's'en,' 'cent ;' and as little 'ver,' 'vert,' 'verre' and 'vers.' Surely it is not very wise to propose gratuitously to extend the same imperfection to the written language as well.

This loss in so many instances of the power to discriminate between words, which, however liable to confusion now in our spoken language, are liable to

none in our written, would be serious enough ; but more serious still would be the loss which would constantly ensue, of all which visibly connects a word with the past, which tells its history, and indicates the quarter from which it has been derived. In how many English words a letter silent to the ear, is yet most eloquent to the eye—the ‘g’ for instance in ‘deign,’ ‘feign,’ ‘reign,’ ‘impugn,’ telling as it does of ‘dignor,’ ‘fingo,’ ‘regno,’ ‘impugno ;’ even as the ‘b’ in ‘debt,’ ‘doubt,’ is not idle, but tells of ‘debitum’ and ‘dubium.’

It is urged indeed as an answer to this, that the scholar does not need these indications to help him to the pedigree of the words with which he deals, that the ignorant is not helped by them ; that the one knows without, and that the other does not know with them ; so that in either case they are profitable for nothing. Let it be freely granted that this in both these cases is true ; but between these two extremes there is a multitude of persons, neither accomplished scholars on the one side, nor yet wholly without the knowledge of all languages save their own on the other ; and I cannot doubt that it is of great value that these should have all helps enabling them to recognize the words which they are using, whence they came, to what words in other languages they are nearly related, and what is their properest and strictest meaning.

At present it is the written word which in all languages constitutes their conservative element. In it is the abiding witness against the mutilations or other capricious changes in shape which affectation, folly, laziness, ignorance, and half-knowledge would intro-

duce. Not seldom it proves unable to hinder the final adoption of these corrupter forms, but it does not fail to oppose to them a constant, and often a successful, resistance. In this way, for example, the 'coco-drill' of our earlier English has given place to the 'crocodile' of our later. With the adoption of phonetic spelling, this witness would exist no longer. Whatever was spoken would have also to be written, were it never so barbarous, never so wide a departure from the true form of the word. Nor is it merely probable that such a barbarizing process, such an adopting and sanctioning of a vulgarism, might take place, but among phonographers it has taken place already. There is a vulgar pronunciation of the word 'Europe,' as though it were 'Eurup.' Now it is quite possible that a larger number of persons in England may pronounce the word in this manner than in the right; and therefore the phonographers are only true to their principles when they spell it 'Eurup,' or, indeed, omitting the first letter 'Urup,' the life of the first syllable being assailed no less than that of the second. What are the consequences? First, all connection with the old mythology is entirely broken off; secondly, its most probable etymology from two Greek words, signifying 'broad' and 'face,'—Europe being so called from the *broad* line or *face* of coast which it presented to the Asiatic Greek,—is totally obscured.¹ But so far from the spelling servilely following the pronunciation, I should be bold to affirm that if ninety-nine out of every hundred persons in England

¹ Ampère has well said, Effacer les signes étymologiques d'une langue, c'est effacer ses titres généalogiques et gratter son écusson.

chose to call Europe 'Urup,' this would be a vulgarism still, against which the written word ought to maintain its protest, not lowering itself to their level, but rather seeking to elevate them to its own.¹

Then, too, if there is much in orthography which is unsettled now, how much more would be unsettled then ! Inasmuch as the pronunciation of words is continually altering, their spelling would of course have continually to alter too. What I here assert, namely, that pronunciation is undergoing constant changes, although changes for the most part unmarked, or marked only by a few, it would be abundantly easy to prove. Take a *Pronouncing Dictionary* of fifty or a hundred years ago ; in almost every page you will observe schemes of pronunciation there recommended which are now merely vulgarisms, or which have been dropped altogether. We gather from a discussion in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*,² that in his time 'great' was

¹ Quintilian has expressed himself with the true dignity of a scholar on this matter (*Inst.* i. 6. 45): *Consuetudinum sermonis vocabo consensum eruditorum; sicut vivendi consensum bonorum.*—How different from innovations like this the changes in German spelling which J. Grimm, so far as his own example may reach, *has* introduced ; and the still bolder which in the *Preface* to his *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, pp. liv–lxii., he avows his desire to see introduced ;—as the employment of *f*, not merely where at present used, but wherever *v* is now employed ; the substituting of the *v*, which would be thus disengaged, for *w*, and the entire dismissal of *w*. These may be advisable, or they may not ; it is not for strangers to offer an opinion ; but at any rate they all rest on a deep historic study of the language, and of its true genius ; and are not a seeking to give permanent authority to the fleeting accidents of the present hour,

² Croker's edit., 1848, pp. 57, 61, 233.

by some of the best speakers of the language pronounced 'greet,' not 'grate : ' Pope usually rhymes it with 'cheat,' 'complete,' and the like ; thus in the *Dunciad* :

' Here swells the shelf with Ogilby the *great*,
There, stamped with arms, Newcastle shines *complete* ;'

while Spenser's constant use, a century and a half earlier, leaves no doubt that such was the established pronunciation of his time. Again, Pope rhymes 'obliged' with 'besieged ;' and it has only ceased to be 'obleege'd' almost in our own time. 'Key' in our Elizabethan literature always rhymes with such words as 'survey' (Shakespeare, *Sonnets*). Who now drinks a cup of 'tay' ? yet it is certain that this was the fashionable pronunciation in the first half of the last century. This couplet of Pope's is one proof out of many :

' Here thou, great Anna, whom three realms *obey*,
Dost sometimes counsel take, and sometimes *tea*.'

Rhyme is a great assistance to the detecting of changes like these, which but for the help that it affords we should fail to detect, which indeed we should often have no means of detecting, which not seldom we should not suspect in the least. Thus when 'should' rhymes with 'cooled' (Shakespeare), with 'hold' (Daniel), with 'cold' (Ben Jonson), 'would' with 'bold' (Ford), with 'mould' (Chapman), with 'old' (Fletcher), and 'could' with 'gold' (Ben Jonson), it is plain that our 'shou'd,' 'wou'd,' 'cou'd,' had not yet established themselves in the language. And how little our words ending in 'ough' are pronounced now

as they were once we gather from the fact that Golding in his translation of *Ovid's Metamorphoses* rhymes 'tough' and 'through,' 'trough' and 'through,' 'rough' and 'plough.'¹ Or a play on words may inform us how the case once stood. Thus there would be no point in the complaint of Cassius² that in all *Rome* there was *room* but for a single man,

'Now is it *Rome* indeed, and *room* enough,'

if *Rome* had not been pronounced in Shakespeare's time, as some few pronounce it still, as I believe John Kemble pronounced it to the last, but as the educated classes of society have now consented not to pronounce it any more. Samuel Rogers assures us that in his youth 'everybody said "Lonnon," not "London;" that Fox said "Lonnon" to the last.'³

Swift long ago urged the same objection against the phonographers of his time: 'Another cause which has contributed not a little to the maiming of our language, is a foolish opinion advanced of late years that we ought to spell exactly as we speak: which, besides the obvious inconvenience of utterly destroying our etymology, would be a thing we should never see an end of. Not only the several towns and coun-

¹ In Levin's *Manipulus Vocabulorum* 'bough,' 'chough,' 'cough,' 'plough,' 'slough,' 'trough,' 'through,' 'rough,' 'tough,' are all arranged together, the book grouping words, though it must be owned rather carelessly, by similar terminations.

² *Julius Caesar*, act i. sc. 2; and compare *King John*, act iii. sc. I.

³ The whole subject, which has been here touched with the very slightest hand, has been exhaustively dealt with by Mr. Ellis, in his great work *On Early English Pronunciation*, 1869.

tries of England have a different way of pronouncing, but even here in London they clip their words after one manner about the court, another in the city, and a third in the suburbs; and in a few years, it is probable, will all differ from themselves, as fancy or fashion shall direct; all which, reduced to writing, would entirely confound orthography.' ¹

Let this much suffice by way of answer to those who would fain revolutionize our English orthography altogether. Dismissing them and their rash innovations, let me call your attention now to those changes in spelling which are constantly going forward, at some periods more rapidly than at others, but which never wholly cease; while at the same time I endeavour to trace, where this is possible, the motives and inducements which bring them about. It is a subject which none can neglect, who desire to obtain an accurate acquaintance with their native tongue. Some principles have been laid down in the course of what has been said already, that may help us to judge whether these changes are for better or for worse. We shall find, if I mistake not, of both kinds.

There are alterations in spelling which are for the worse. Thus an altered spelling will sometimes obscure the origin of a word, concealing it from those who would else at once have known whence and what it was, and would have found both pleasure and profit in this knowledge. In all those cases where the earlier spelling revealed the secret of the word, told

¹ *A Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue*, 1711, *Works*, vol. ix. pp. 139-159.

its history, which the latter defaces or obscures, the change has been injurious, and is to be regretted ; while yet, where this is thoroughly established, any attempt to undo it would be absurd. Thus, when 'grocer' was spelt 'grosser,' it was comparatively easy to see that he first had his name, because he sold his wares not by retail, but in the *gross*. 'Coxcomb' tells us nothing now ; but it did when spelt 'cockscomb,' the *comb* of a *cock* being an ensign or token which the fool was accustomed to wear. In 'grogram' we are entirely to seek for the derivation ; but in 'grogran' or 'grograin,' as earlier it was spelt, one could scarcely miss 'grograin,' the stuff of a *coarse grain* or woof. What a mischievous alteration in spelling is 'divest' instead of 'devest.' The change here is so recent that surely it would not be impossible to return to the only intelligible spelling.

'Pigmy' used once to be spelt 'pygmy,' and no Greek scholar could then fail to perceive that by 'pigmies' were indicated manikins of no greater height than that of a man's arm from the elbow to the closed fist.¹ Now he may know this in other ways ; but the word itself tells him nothing. Or again, the old spelling, 'diamant,' was preferable to the modern 'diamond.' It was so, because it told more of the past history of the word. 'Diamant' and 'adamant' are in fact no more than different adoptions by the English tongue, of one and the same Greek, which afterwards became a Latin, word. The primary meaning of 'adamant' is, as you are aware, the indomitable, and it was a name given at first to steel

¹ Pygmæi, quasi *cubitales* (Augustine).

as the hardest of metals ; but afterwards transferred ¹ to the most precious among all the precious stones, as that which in power of resistance surpassed everything besides.

Neither are new spellings to be commended, which obliterate or obscure the relationship of a word with others to which it is really allied ; separating from one another, for those not thoroughly acquainted with the subject, words of the same family. Thus, when 'jaw' was spelt '*chaw*,' no one could miss its connection with the verb 'to chew.' Now probably ninety-nine out of a hundred are unaware of any relationship between them. It is the same with 'cousin' (consanguineus), and 'to cozen.' I do not say which of these should conform to the spelling of the other. The spelling of both was irregular from the first ; while yet it was then better than now, when a permanent distinction has established itself between them, keeping out of sight that 'to cozen' is in all likelihood to deceive under show of affinity ; if which be so, Shakespeare's words,

'Cousins indeed, and by their uncle cozened
Of comfort,' ²

¹ First so used by Theophrastus in Greek, and by Pliny in Latin. The real identity of the two words explains Milton's use of 'diamond' in *Paradise Lost*, b. vi. ; and also in that sublime passage in his *Apology for Smectymnus*: 'Then Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete *diamond* ascends his fiery chariot.'—Diez (*Wörterbuch d. Roman. Sprachen*, p. 123) supposes, not very probably, that it was under a certain influence of '*diafano*,' the translucent, that '*adamante*' was in the Italian, from whence we have derived the word, changed into '*diamante*.'

² *Richard III.* Act iv. Sc. 4.

will contain not a pun, but an etymology. The real relation between 'bliss' and 'to bless' is in like manner at present obscured.

The omission of a letter, or the addition of a letter, may each effectually work to keep out of sight the true character and origin of a word. Thus the omission of a letter. When for 'bran-new,' it was 'brand-new' with a final 'd,' how vigorous was the image here. The 'brand' is the fire, and 'brand-new,' equivalent to 'fire-new' (Shakespeare), is that which is fresh and bright, as being newly come from the forge and fire. As now spelt, it conveys to us no image at all. Again, you have the word 'scrip'—as a 'scrip' of paper, railway 'scrip.' Is this the Saxon 'scrip,' a wallet, which has in some strange manner obtained these meanings so different and so remote? Have we here only two different applications of one and the same word, or two homonyms, wholly different words, though spelt alike? It is sufficient to note how the first of these 'scrips' used to be written, namely with a final 't,' not 'scrip' but 'script,' and the question is answered. This 'scrip' is a Latin, as the other is an English, word, and meant at first simply a *written* (scripta) piece of paper—a circumstance which since the omission of the final 't' may easily escape our knowledge. 'Afraid' was spelt much better in old times with the double 'ff,' than with the single 'f' as now. It was then clear that it was not another form of 'afeared,' but wholly separate from it, the participle of the verb 'to affray,' 'affrayer,' or, as it is now written, 'effrayer.'

In these cases it has been the omission of a letter which has clouded and concealed the etymology.

The intrusion of a letter sometimes does the same. Thus in the early editions of *Paradise Lost*, and in the writings of that age, you will find 'scent,' an odour, spelt 'sent.' It was better so ; there is no other noun substantive 'sent,' with which it is in danger of being confounded ; while its relation with 'sentio,' with 'resent,'¹ 'dissent,' 'consent,' and the like, is put out of sight by its novel spelling ; the intrusive 'c' serving only to mislead. The same thing was attempted with 'site,' 'situate,' 'situation,' spelt for a time by many, 'scite,' 'scituate,' 'scituation ;' but it did not continue with these. Again, 'whole,' in Wiclif's Bible, and indeed much later, sometimes as far down as Spenser, is spelt 'hole,' without the 'w' at the beginning. The present orthography may have the advantage of at once distinguishing the word to the eye from any other ; but at the same time the initial 'w' hides its relation to the verb 'to heal.' The 'whole' man is he whose hurt is 'healed' or covered (we say of the convalescent that he 'recovers') ; 'whole' being closely allied to 'hale' (integer), from which also by its modern spelling it is divided. 'Wholesome' has naturally followed the fortunes of 'whole ;' it was spelt 'holsome' once.²

Of 'island' too our present spelling is inferior to

¹ How close this relationship was once, not merely in respect of etymology, but also of significance, a passage like this will prove: 'Perchance, as vultures are said to smell the earthiness of a dying corpse ; so this bird of prey [the evil spirit which, according to Fuller, personated Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 14] *resented* a worse than earthly savor in the soul of Saul, as evidence of his death at hand' (Fuller, *The Profane State*, b. v. c. 4).

² Earle, *Philology of the English Tongue*, p. 142.

the old, inasmuch as it suggests a hybrid formation, as though the word were made up of the Latin 'insula,' and the Saxon 'land.' It is quite true that 'isle' is in relation with, and descent from, 'insula,' 'isola,' 'île ;' and hence probably the misspelling of 'island.' This last however has nothing to do with 'insula,' being identical with the German 'eiland,' the Anglo-Saxon 'ealand,' and signifying either the land apart,¹ or land girt round with the sea. And it is worthy of note that this 's' is quite of modern introduction. In the earlier Versions of the Scriptures, and in the Authorized Version as first set forth, it is 'iland ;' which is not accidental, seeing that 'isle' has the 's,' which 'iland' has not (see Rev. i. 9) ; and the correct spelling obtained far down into the seventeenth century.

One of the most frequent causes of alteration in the spelling of a word is a wrongly assumed derivation ; as has been the case with the word which we dealt with. It is then sought to bring the word into harmony with, and to make it by its spelling suggest, this derivation, which has been erroneously thrust upon it. Here is a subject which, followed out as it deserves, would form an interesting and instructive chapter in the history of language. Very remarkable is the evidence which we have here to the way in which learned and unlearned alike crave to have a meaning in the words which they employ, to have these not body only, but body and soul. Where for the popular sense the life has died out from a word, men will put into it a life of their own devising, rather

¹ 'Eiland' for 'einlant,' see Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. v.

than that it should henceforth be a mere dead and inert sign for them. Much more will they be tempted to this in the case of foreign words, which have been adopted into the language, but which have not brought with them, at least for the popular mind, the secret of their origin. These shall tell something about themselves ; and when they cannot tell what is true, or when that true is not intelligible any more, then, rather than that they should say nothing, men compel them to suggest what is false, moulding and shaping them into some new form, until at least they shall appear to do this.¹

There is probably no language in which such a process has not been going forward ; in which it is not the explanation, in a vast number of instances, of changes in spelling and even in form, which words have undergone. I will offer a few examples of it from foreign tongues, before adducing any from our own. 'Pyramid' is a word whose spelling was affected in the Greek by an erroneous assumption of its derivation ; the consequences of this error surviving to the present day. It is spelt by us with a 'y' in the first syllable, as it was spelt with the corresponding letter in the Greek. But why was this ? It was because the Greeks assumed that the pyramids were so named from their having the appearance of *flame* going up into a point,² and so they spelt 'pyramid,' that they might find $\pi\upsilon\rho$ or 'pyre' in it ; while

¹ Diez looks with much favour on this process, and calls it, ein sinnreiches Mittel Fremdlinge ganz heimisch zu machen. Compare Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, pp. 114-117 ; Mätzner, *Engl. Grammatik*, vol. i. p. 483.

² Ammianus Marcellinus, xxii. 15, 28.

in fact 'pyramid' has nothing to do with flame or fire at all ; being, as those best qualified to speak on the matter declare to us, an Egyptian word of quite a different signification, and the Coptic letters being much better represented by the diphthong 'ei' than by the letter 'y,' as no doubt, but for this mistaken notion of what the word was intended to mean, they would have been.

Once more—the form 'Hierosolyma,' the Greek reproduction of the Hebrew 'Jerusalem,' was intended in all probability to express that the city so called was the *sacred* city of the *Solymi*.¹ At all events the intention not merely of reproducing the Hebrew word, but also of making it significant in Greek, of finding *ἱερόν* in it, is plainly discernible. For indeed the Greeks were exceedingly intolerant of foreign words, till these had laid aside their foreign appearance,—intolerant of all words which they could not quicken with a Greek soul ; and, with a very characteristic vanity and an ignoring of all other tongues but their own, assumed with no apparent misgivings that all words, from whatever quarter derived, were to be explained by Greek etymologies.²

Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 2.

² Let me illustrate this by further instances in a note. Thus *βούτυρον*, from which, through the Latin, our 'butter' has reached us, is borrowed (Pliny, *H. N.* xxviii. 9) from a Scythian word, now to us unknown : yet it is sufficiently plain that the Greeks so shaped and spelt it as to contain apparent allusion to *cow* and *cheese* ; there is in *βούτυρον* an evident feeling after *βοῦς* and *τυρόν*. Bozra, meaning citadel in Hebrew and Phœnician, and the name, no doubt, which the citadel of Carthage bore, becomes *Βύρσα* on Greek lips ; and then the well-known legend of the ox-hide was invented upon the name ; not having suggested,

‘Tartar’ is another word, of which it is at least possible that a wrongly assumed derivation has modified the spelling, and not the spelling only, but the very shape in which we now possess it. To many among us it may be known that the people designated by this appellation are not properly ‘Tartars,’ but ‘Tatars;’ and you may sometimes have noted the omission of the ‘r’ on the part of some who are curious in their spelling. How then, it may be asked, did the form ‘Tartar’ arise? When the terrible hordes of middle Asia burst in upon civilized Europe

but being itself suggested by it. Herodian (v. 6) reproduces the name of the Syrian goddess Astarte in a shape significant for Greek ears—*Ἀστροάρχη*, The Star-ruler or Star-queen. When the apostate hellenizing Jews assumed Greek names, ‘Eliakim’ or ‘Whom God has set,’ became ‘Alcimus’ (*ἄλκιμος*) or The Strong (I Macc. vii. 5). Latin examples in like kind are ‘comissatio,’ spelt continually ‘comessatio’ and ‘comessation’ by those who sought to naturalize it in England, as though connected with ‘cōmedo,’ to eat, being indeed the substantive from the verb ‘cōmissari’ (= *κωμάζειν*), to revel; as Plutarch, whose Latin is in general not very accurate, long ago correctly observed; and ‘orichalcum,’ spelt often ‘aurichalcum,’ as though it were a composite metal of mingled *gold* and brass; being indeed the *mountain* brass (*ὄρειχαλκος*). The miracle play, which is ‘mystère’ in French, whence our English ‘mystery,’ was originally written ‘mistère,’ being derived from ‘ministère,’ and having its name because the clergy, the *ministerium* or *ministri* Ecclesiæ, conducted it. This was forgotten, and it then became ‘mystery,’ as though so called because the mysteries of the faith were in it set out. The mole in German was ‘moltwurf,’ our English ‘moldwarp,’ once, one that cast up the mould; but ‘molte’ faded out of the language, and the word became, as it now is, ‘maulwurf,’ one that casts up with the ‘maul’ or mouth;—which indeed the creature does not.

in the thirteenth century, many beheld in the ravages of their innumerable cavalry a fulfilment of that prophetic word in the Revelation (chap. ix.) concerning the opening of the bottomless pit; and from this belief ensued the change of their name from 'Tatars' to 'Tartars,' which was thus put into closer relation with 'Tartarus,' or hell, whence their multitudes were supposed to have proceeded.¹

Another good example in the same kind is the German word 'sündflut,' the Deluge, which is now so spelt as to signify a 'sinflood,' the plague or *flood* of waters brought on the world by the *sins* of mankind; and some of us may before this have admired the pregnant significance of the word. Yet the old High German word had originally no such intention; it was spelt 'sinfluot,' that is, the great flood; and as late as Luther, indeed in Luther's own translation of the Bible, is so spelt as to make plain that the notion of a 'sin-flood' had not yet found its way into, as it had not affected the spelling of, the word.²

But to look nearer home for our examples: 'Ceiling' was always 'sealing,' that which seals or closes the roof, in our early English; but, as it is easy to explain, *cælum* (*ciel*) made itself unconsciously felt,

¹ We have here, in this bringing of the words by their supposed etymology together, the explanation of the fact that Spenser (*Fairy Queen*, i. 7, 44), Middleton (*Works*, vol. v. pp. 524, 528, 538), and others employ 'Tartary' as equivalent to 'Tartarus,' or hell.

² For a full discussion of this matter and fixing of the period at which 'sinfluot' became 'sündflut,' see an article by J. Grimm, in the *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, vol. ii. p. 613; and Delitzsch, *Genesis*, 2nd ed. vol. ii. p. 210.

intruded into the word, and changed the spelling to our present. The little raisins brought from Greece, which play so important a part in our Christmas plum-pudding, used to be called 'corinths;' and this name they bear in mercantile lists of a hundred years ago: either that for the most part they were shipped from Corinth, the principal commercial city in Greece, or because they grew in large abundance in the immediate district round about it. Their likeness in shape and size and general appearance to our own currants, working together with the ignorance of the great majority of English people about any such place as Corinth, soon transformed 'corinths' into 'currants,' the name which now with a certain unfitness they bear; being not currants at all, but dried grapes, though grapes of diminutive size.

'*Court-cards*,' that is, the king, queen, and knave in each suit, were once '*coat-cards*;' ¹ having their name from the long splendid 'coat' with which they were arrayed. Probably 'coat' after a while did not perfectly convey its original meaning and intention; being no more in common use for the long garment (the *vestis talaris*) reaching down to the heels; and then 'coat' was easily exchanged for 'court,' as the word is now both spelt and pronounced, seeing that nowhere so fitly as in a Court should such splendidly arrayed personages be found. A public-house in the neighbourhood of London having a few years since for its sign '*The George Canning*,' is already '*The George and Cannon*,'—so rapidly do these transformations proceed, so soon is that forgotten which we sup-

¹ Ben Jonson, *The New Inn*, Act i. Sc. i.

pose would never be forgotten. 'Welsh *rarebit*' becomes 'Welsh *rabbit*;' and '*farced*,' or stuffed 'meat,' becomes '*forced* meat.' The mere determination to make a word *look* English, to put it into an English shape, without thereby so much as seeming to attain any result in the way of etymology, is often sufficient to modify its spelling, and even its form.¹ It is thus that 'sipahi' has become 'sepoy;' and only so could 'weissager' have taken its present form of 'wiseacre;' ² or 'hausenblase' become 'isinglass;' or 'wermode,' as in Wiclif (compare the German 'wermuth'), become 'wormwood.' Another word which in the spelling, and indeed in more than spelling, simulates an English form, is rosemary (ros marinus).

Not uncommonly a word, derived from one word, will receive a certain impulse and modification from another. This extends sometimes beyond the spelling, and where it does so, would hardly belong to our present theme. Still I may notice an instance or two. Thus our 'obsequies' is the Latin 'exequiæ,' but formed under a certain impulse of 'obsequium,' and

¹ 'Leghorn' is sometimes quoted as an example of this; but erroneously; for, as Admiral Smyth has shown (*The Mediterranean*, p. 409), 'Livorno' is itself rather the modern corruption, and 'Ligorno' the name found on the earlier charts.

² Exactly the same happens in other languages; thus, 'armbrust,' a crossbow, *looks* German enough, and yet has nothing to do with 'arm' or 'brust,' being a contraction of 'arcubalista,' but a contraction under these influences. As little has 'abenteuer' anything to do with 'abend' or 'theuer,' however it may seem to be connected with them, being indeed the Provençal 'adventura.' So too 'weissagen' in its earlier forms had nothing in common with 'sagen.' On this subject see Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 116.

seeking to express and include the observant honour implied in that word. 'To refuse' is 'recusare,' while yet it has derived the 'f' of its second syllable from 'refutare;' it is a medley of the two. The French 'rame,' an oar, is 'remus,' but that modified by an unconscious recollection of 'ramus.' The old French 'candelarbre' is 'candelabrum,' but with 'arbre' seeking to intrude itself into the word. So too the French has adopted the German 'sauerkraut,' but in the form of 'chou-croute,' of which the explanation is obvious. The Italian 'convitare' is the Latin 'invitare,' but with 'convivium' making itself felt in the first syllable. 'Orange' is a Persian word, which has reached us through the Arabic, and which the Spanish 'naranja' more nearly represents than the form existing in other languages of Europe. But what so natural as to contemplate this as the *golden* fruit, especially when the '*aurea* mala' of the Hesperides were familiar to all antiquity? In this way 'aurum,' 'oro,' 'or,' made itself felt in the various shapes which the word assumed in languages of the West, and we have here the explanation of the change in the first syllable, as in the Low Latin 'aurantium,' in 'orangia,' in the French 'orange,' and in our own.¹

It is foreign words, or words adopted from foreign languages, as already has been said, which are especially subjected to such transformations as these. The soul which they once had in their own language, having, for as many as do not know that language, departed from them, men will not rest till they have put another soul into them again. Thus—to take

¹ See Mahn, *Etym. Untersuch.* p. 157.

first one or two popular and familiar instances, than which none serve better to illustrate the laws which preside over human speech,—the Bellerophon becomes for our sailors the ‘Billy Ruffian,’ for what can they know of the Greek mythology, or of the slayer of Chimæra? An iron steamer, the Hironnelle, which plied on the Tyne for a while, was the ‘Iron Devil.’ ‘*Contredanse*,’ or dance in which the parties stand *face to face* with one another, and which ought to have appeared in English as ‘*counter* dance,’ becomes ‘*country* dance,’¹ as though it were the dance of the country folk and rural districts, as distinguished from the quadrille and waltz and more artificial dances of the town.² A well-known rose, the rose of the four

¹ On this word De Quincey (*Life and Manners*, p. 70, American Ed.) says well: ‘It is in fact by such corruptions, by off-sets upon an old stock, arising through ignorance or mispronunciation originally, that every language is frequently enriched; and new modifications of thought, unfolding themselves in the progress of society, generate for themselves concurrently appropriate expressions. . . . It must not be allowed to weigh against a word once fairly naturalized by all, that originally it crept in upon an abuse or a corruption. Prescription is as strong a ground of legitimation in a case of this nature, as it is in law. And the old axiom is applicable—*Fieri non debuit, factum valet*. Were it otherwise, languages would be robbed of much of their wealth.’

² Unless indeed according to the rights of the case it should prove the exact converse of this, and the French ‘*contredanse*’ be derived from our country dance: see Chappell’s argument to prove this in his *Popular Music*, vol. ii. p. 627, with his reference to the *Encyclopédie Méthodique* of 1791. Whether we derived from the French, or the French from us, the illustration of the matter in hand remains equally good.

seasons, or 'rose des quatre saisons,' becomes on the lips of our gardeners, the 'rose of the *quarter sessions*,' though here the eye must have misled rather than the ear. The cherry of Médoc becomes presently a 'may-duke.' 'Dent de lion' (it is spelt 'dentdelyon' in our early writers) becomes 'dandelion,' '*chaude mêlée*,' or an affray in *hot* blood, '*chancemedley*,' 'causey' (*chaussée*, or *viacalceata*) becomes 'causeway,' 'rachitis' 'rickets,' 'mandragora' in French 'main de gloire,' and 'hammock' (a native Indian word), is in Dutch 'hang-mat.'

'Necromancy' for a long time was erroneously spelt, under the influence of an erroneous derivation; which, perhaps even now, has left traces behind it in our popular phrase, 'the *Black Art*.' Prophecy by aid of the dead, as I need not tell you, is the proper meaning of the word; assuming as it does that these may be raised by potent spells, and compelled to give answers about things to come. Of such 'necromancy' we have a very awful example in the story of the witch of Endor, and a very horrid one in Lucan.¹ But the Latin medieval writers, whose Greek was either little or none, spelt the word '*nigromantia*,' while at the same time getting round to the original meaning, though by a wrong process, they understood the dead by these 'nigri,' or blacks, whom they had brought into the word.² Down to a late day we find '*negromancer*' and '*negromancy*' frequent in English.

'Pleurisy' used often to be spelt (it is hardly so

¹ *Phars.* vi. 720-830.

² Thus in a *Vocabulary*, 1475: *Nigromansia dicitur divinatio facta per nigros.*

now) without an 'e' in the first syllable, evidently on the tacit assumption that it was from *plus pluris*. When Shakespeare falls into an error, he 'makes the offence gracious ;' yet, I think, he would scarcely have written,

'For goodness growing to a *plurisy*
Dies of his own *too much*,'

but that *he* too derived 'plurisy' from *pluris*. This, even with the 'small Latin and less Greek,' which Ben Jonson allows him, he scarcely would have done, had the word presented itself in that form, which by right of its descent from *πλευρά* (being a pain, stitch, or sickness *in the side*) it ought to have possessed. Those who for 'crucible' wrote 'chrysoble' (Jeremy Taylor does so), must evidently have assumed that the Greek for *gold*, and not the Latin for *cross*, lay at the foundation of the word. 'Anthymn' instead of 'anthem' (Barrow so spells it), rests plainly on a wrong etymology, even as this spelling clearly betrays what that wrong etymology is. 'Lanthorn' (Fuller) for 'lantern,' not less clearly does the same. 'Rhyme' with a 'y' is a modern misspelling ; and would never have been but for the undue influence which the Greek 'rhythm' has exercised upon it. Spenser and his contemporaries spelt it 'rime.' 'Abominable' was not unfrequently in the seventeenth century spelt 'ab/hominable,' as though it were that which departed from the human (*ab homine*) into the bestial or devilish. 'Posthumous' owes the 'h' which has found its way into it to the notion that, instead of being a superlative of 'posterus,' it has something to do with 'post humum.'

In all these instances but one the correct spelling has in the end resumed its sway. Not so however 'frontispiece,' which ought to be spelt 'frontispice,' (it was so by Milton and others,) being the Low Latin 'frontispicium,' from 'frons' and 'aspicio,' the fore-front of the building, that side which presents itself to the view. The entirely ungrounded notion that 'piece' constitutes the last syllable, has given rise to our present orthography.¹

¹ As 'orthography' itself means 'right spelling,' it might be a curious question whether it is permissible to speak of an *incorrect orthography*, that is, of a *wrong right-spelling*. The question thus started is one of frequent recurrence, and it is worthy of note how often this *contradictio in adjecto* is found to occur. Thus the Greeks, having no convenient word for rider, apart from rider *on a horse*, did not scruple to speak of the *horseman* (ἵππεύς) upon an *elephant*. They are often as inaccurate and with no necessity; as in using ἀνδριάς of the statue of a *woman*; where εἰκών or ἄγαλμα would have served as well. So too their table (τράπεζα = τετράπεζα) involved probably the *four* feet which commonly support one; yet they did not shrink from speaking of a *three-footed* table (τρίπους τράπεζα), in other words, a '*three-footed four-footed*;' much as though we should speak of a '*three-footed quadruped*.' Homer's 'hecatomb' is not of a *hundred*, but of twelve, oxen; and elsewhere of Hebe he says, in words not reproducible in English, νέκταρ ἐωνοχόει. His ἰκτιδέη κυνέη, a helmet of weasel-skin, but more strictly a weaselskin dogskin, contains a like contradiction. Ἄκρατος, the unmingled, had so come to stand for wine, that St. John speaks of ἄκρατος κεκερασμένος (Rev. xiv. 10), or the mingled unmingled. Boxes to hold precious ointments were so commonly of alabaster, that they bore this name whether they were so or not; and Theocritus celebrates '*golden alabasters*;' as one might now speak of a '*silver pyx*,' that is a silver *boxwood*, or of an iron box. Cicero has no choice but to call a water-clock a *water sun-*

You may, perhaps, wonder that I have dwelt so long on these details of spelling; that I have bestowed on them so much of my own attention, that I have claimed for them so much of yours; yet in truth I cannot regard them as unworthy of our very closest heed. For indeed of how much beyond itself is accurate or inaccurate spelling the certain indication. Thus when we meet 'syren,' for 'siren,' as so strangely often we do, almost always in newspapers, and often where we should hardly have expected (I met it lately in the *Quarterly Review*, and again in Gifford's *Mas-singer*), how difficult it is not to be 'judges of evil thoughts,' and to take this slovenly misspelling as the specimen and evidence of an inaccuracy and ignorance which reaches very far wider than the single word which is before us. But why is it that so much significance is ascribed to a wrong spelling? Because ignorance of a word's spelling at once argues ignorance of its origin and derivation. I do not mean that one who spells rightly may not be ignorant of it too, but he who spells wrongly is certainly so. We are

dial (solarium ex aquâ); Columella speaks of a '*vintage* of honey' (vindemia mellis), and Horace invites his friend to *impede*, not his *foot*, but his head, with myrtle (*caput impedire myrto*). A German who should desire to tell of the golden shoes with which the folly of Caligula adorned his horse, could scarcely avoid speaking of *golden* hoof-*irons*. Ink in some German dialects is 'blak,' but red ink is 'rood blak,' or red black. The same inner contradiction is involved in such language as our own, a '*false verdict*,' a '*steel pen*' (penna), a '*steel cuirass*' ('coriacea' from corium, leather), '*antics new*' (Harington's *Ariosto*), '*looking-glasses of brass*' (Exod. xxxviii. 8), a '*sweet sauce*' (salsa), an '*erroneous etymology*,' '*rather late*,' '*rather*' being the comparative of '*rathe*;' and in others.

quite sure that he who for 'siren' writes 'syren,' knows nothing of the magic knots and entanglements (*σειραί*) of song, by which those enchantresses, at once so fair and so foul, were supposed to draw as many as heard them to their ruin; and from which they most probably had their name.

Correct or incorrect orthography being, then, this note of accurate or inaccurate knowledge, we may confidently conclude where two spellings of a word exist, and are both employed by persons who generally write with precision, that there must be something to account for this. It will be worth your while to inquire into the causes which enable both spellings to hold their ground, and to have their supporters not ascribing either one or the other to mere carelessness or error. You will commonly find that two spellings exist, because two views of the word's origin exist, which those two spellings severally express. The question therefore which way of spelling should continue, and wholly supersede the other, and which, so long as both are allowed, we should ourselves employ, can only be settled by determining which of these etymologies deserves the preference. It is thus with 'chymist' and 'chemist,' neither of which has obtained in our common use a complete ascendancy over the other. It is not here, that one mode is certainly right, the other as certainly wrong: but they severally represent two different etymologies of the word, and each is correct according to its own. When we spell 'chymist' and 'chymistry,' we implicitly affirm the words to be derived from the Greek *χυμός*, sap; and the chymic art will then have occupied itself first with distilling the juice and sap of plants, and

will from this have drawn its name. Many however object to this, that it was not with the distillation of herbs, but with the amalgamation of metals, that chemistry occupied itself at the first, and find in the word a reference to Egypt, the land of Ham or 'Cham,'¹ in which this art was first practised with success. In this case 'chemist,' and not 'chymist,' would be the only correct spelling.

Of how much confusion the spelling which used to be so common, 'satyr' for 'satire,' is at once the consequence, the expression, and again the cause. Not indeed that this confusion first began with us;² 'satyricus' in the Latin was no less continually written for 'satiricus'; and this out of an assumed identity of the Roman *satire* and the Greek *satyric* drama; while in fact satire was the only form of poetry which the Romans did *not* borrow from the Greeks. The Roman 'satira,'—I speak of things familiar to many

¹ *Xηψα*, the name of Egypt; see Plutarch, *De Is. et Os.* c. 33. For reasons against this, the favourite etymology at present, see Mahn, *Etymol. Untersuch.* p. 81. There is some uncertainty about the spelling of 'hybrid.' If from *ὑβρις*, this would of course at once settle the question.

² We have a notable evidence how deeply rooted this error was, of the way in which it was shared by the learned as well as the unlearned, in Milton's *Apology for Smectymnuus*, sect. 7, which everywhere presumes the identity of the 'satyr' and the 'satirist.' It was Isaac Casaubon who first effectually dissipated it even for the learned world. The results of his investigations were made popular by Dryden, in the very instructive *Discourse on Satirical Poetry*, prefixed to his translations from Juvenal; but the confusion still survives, and 'satyrs' and 'satires,' the Greek 'satyric' drama, the Latin 'satirical' poetry, are still assumed by many to stand in some near relation to one another.

of my hearers,—is properly a *full* dish (*lanx* being understood)—a dish heaped up with various ingredients, a ‘farce,’ or hodge-podge; the name being transferred from this to a form of poetry which at first admitted the utmost variety in the materials of which it was composed, and the shapes into which these materials were wrought up. Wholly different from this, having no one point of contact with it in form, history, or intention, is the ‘satyric’ drama of Greece, so called because Silenus and the satyrs supplied the chorus; and in their naive selfishness, and mere animal instincts, held up before men a mirror of what they would be, if only the divine, which is also the truly human, element of humanity, were withdrawn; what man, all that properly constituted him such being withdrawn, would prove.

And then what light, as we have already seen, does the older spelling often cast upon a word’s etymology; how often clear up the mystery, which would otherwise have hung about it, or which *had* hung about it till some one had noticed and turned to profit this its earlier spelling. Thus ‘dirge’ is always spelt ‘dirige’ in early English. Now this ‘dirige’ *may be* the first word in a Latin psalm or prayer once used at funerals; there is a reasonable likelihood that the explanation of ‘dirge’ is here; at any rate, if it is not here, it is nowhere. The derivation of ‘midwife’ is uncertain, and has been the subject of discussion; but when we find it spelt ‘medewife’ and ‘meadwife,’ in Wiclif’s Bible, this leaves hardly a doubt that it is the *wife* or woman who acts for a *mead* or reward. In cases too where there was no mystery hanging about a word, how often does the early spelling make clear to all that

which was before only known to those who had made the language their special study. Thus if an early edition of Spenser should come into your hands, or a modern one in which the early spelling is retained, what continual lessons in English might you derive from it. Thus 'nostril' is always spelt by him and his contemporaries 'nosethrill;' a little earlier it was 'nosethirle.' Now 'to thrill' is the same as to drill or pierce; it is plain then here at once that the word signifies the orifice or opening with which the *nose* is *thrilled*, drilled, or pierced. We might have read the word for ever in our modern spelling without being taught this. 'Ell' gives us no clue to its own meaning; but in 'eln,' used in Holland's translation of Camden, we recognize 'ulna' at once. Again, the 'morris' or 'morrice-dance,' of which in our early poets we hear so much, as it is now spelt tells us nothing about itself; but read '*moriske* dance,' as Holland and his contemporaries spell it, and you will scarcely fail to perceive, that it was so called either because it was really, or was supposed to be, a dance in use among the *moriscoes* of Spain, and from Spain introduced into England.¹ Once more, we are told that our 'cray-fish,' or 'craw-fish,' is the French 'écrevisse.' This is quite true, but it is not self-evident. Trace it however through these successive spellings, 'krevys' (Lydgate), 'crevish' (Gascoigne), 'craifish' (Holland), and the chasm between 'cray-fish' or

1

'I have seen him

Caper upright, like a wild *Mórisco*,

Shaking the bloody darts, as he his bells.'

Shakespeare, *2 Henry VI.* Act. iii. Sc. I.

‘craw-fish’ and ‘écrevisse’ is by aid of these three intermediate spellings bridged over at once; and in the fact of our Gothic ‘fish’ finding its way into this French vocable we see one example more of a law, which has been already abundantly illustrated in this lecture.¹

¹ In the reprinting of old books it is often hard to determine how far the earlier spelling of words should be retained, how far they should be conformed to present usage. It is comparatively easy to lay down as a rule that in books intended for popular use, wherever the form of the word is not affected by the modernizing of the spelling, there this modernizing shall take place; (who, for example, would wish our Bibles to be now printed letter for letter after the edition of 1611, or Shakespeare with the orthography of the first folio?) but wherever the shape, outline, and character of the word have been affected by the changes which it has undergone, there the earlier form shall be held fast. The rule is a judicious one; but in practice it is not always easy to determine what affects the form and essence of a word, and what does not. About some words there can be no doubt; and therefore when a modern editor of Fuller’s *Church History* complacently announces that he has changed ‘dirige’ into ‘dirge,’ ‘barreter’ into ‘barrister,’ ‘synonymas’ into ‘synonymous’(!), ‘extempory’ into ‘extemporary,’ ‘scited’ into ‘situated,’ ‘van-currier’ into ‘avant-courier,’ and the like, he at the same time informs us that for all purposes of the study of English (and few writers are for this more important than Fuller), his edition is worthless. Or again, when modern editors of Shakespeare print, giving at the same time no intimation of the fact,

‘Like quills upon the fretful *porcupine*,’

the word in his first folio and quarto standing,

‘Like quills upon the fretful *porpentine*,’

and this being in Shakespeare’s time the current form of the word, they have taken an unwarrantable liberty with his text;

In other ways also an accurate taking note of the successive changes which words have undergone, will often throw light upon them. Thus we may know, others having assured us of the fact, that 'emmet' and 'ant' were originally only two different spellings of the same word; but we may be perplexed to understand how two forms, now so different, could ever have diverged from a single root. When however we find the different spellings, 'emmet,' 'emet,' 'amet,' 'amt,' 'ant,' the gulf which appeared to separate 'emmet' from 'ant' is bridged over at once, and we not merely accept on the assurance of others that these two are identical, but we perceive clearly in what manner they are so.

Even apart from any close examination of the matter, it is hard not to suspect that 'runagate' is another form of 'renegade,' this being slightly transformed, as so many words, to put an English signification into its first syllable; and then the meaning gradually modified under the influence of the new derivation, which was assumed to be its original and true one. Our suspicion of this is strengthened (for we see how very closely the words approach one another), by the fact that 'renegade' is constantly spelt 'renegate' in our old authors, while at the same time the denial of *faith*, which is now a necessary element in 'renegade,' and one differencing it inwardly from 'runagate,' is altogether wanting in early use—the denial of *country* and of the duties thereto

and no less, when they substitute 'Kenilworth' for 'Killingworth,' which was his, Marlowe's, and generally the earlier form of the name.

owing being all that is implied in it. Thus it is constantly employed in Holland's *Livy* as a rendering of 'perfuga ;'¹ while in the one passage where 'runagate' occurs in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms (Ps. lxxviii. 6), a reference to the original will show that the Translators could only have employed it there on the ground that it also expressed rebel, revolter, and not runaway merely.

I might easily occupy your attention much longer, so little barren or unfruitful does this subject of spelling appear likely to prove ; but all things must have an end ; and as I concluded my first lecture with a remarkable testimony borne by an illustrious German scholar to the merits of our English tongue, I will conclude my last with the words of another, not indeed a German, but still of the great Germanic stock ; words resuming in themselves much of which we have been speaking upon this and upon former occasions : 'As our bodies,' he says, 'have hidden resources and expedients, to remove the obstacles which the very art of the physician puts in its way, so language, ruled by an indomitable inward principle, triumphs in some degree over the folly of grammarians. Look at the English, polluted by Danish and Norman conquests, distorted in its genuine and noble features by old and recent endeavours to mould it after the French fashion, invaded by a hostile entrance of Greek and Latin words, threatening by increasing hosts to overwhelm the indigenous terms.

¹ 'The Carthaginians shall restore and deliver back all the *renegates* [perfugas] and fugitives that have fled to their side from us.'—p. 751.

In these long contests against the combined power of so many forcible enemies, the language, it is true, has lost some of its power of inversion in the structure of sentences, the means of denoting the difference of gender, and the nice distinctions by inflection and termination—almost every word is attacked by the spasm of the accent and the drawing of consonants to wrong positions ; yet the old English principle is not overpowered. Trampled down by the ignoble feet of strangers, its springs still retain force enough to restore itself. It lives and plays through all the veins of the language ; it impregnates the innumerable strangers entering its dominions with its temper, and stains them with its colour, not unlike the Greek, which in taking up Oriental words, stripped them of their foreign costume, and bid them to appear as native Greeks.’¹

¹ Halbertsma, quoted by Bosworth, *Origin of the English and Germanic Languages*, p. 39.

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C
ON THE
STUDY OF WORDS
LECTURES

ADDRESSED (ORIGINALLY) TO THE PUPILS AT
THE DIOCESAN TRAINING-SCHOOL, WINCHESTER

BY
RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN

'Language is the armoury of the human mind, and at once contains the trophies of its past, and the weapons of its future, conquests'—COLERIDGE

'Out, idle words, servants to shallow fools!'—SHAKESPEARE

FOURTEENTH EDITION, REVISED

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PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

THESE lectures will not, I trust, be found any where to have left out of sight seriously, or for long, the peculiar needs of those for whom they were originally intended, and to whom they were primarily addressed. I am conscious, indeed, here and there, of a certain departure from my first intention, having been in part seduced to this by a circumstance which I had not in the least contemplated when I obtained permission to deliver them, by finding, namely, that I should have other hearers besides the pupils of the Training School. Some matter adapted for those rather than for these I was thus led to introduce—which afterwards I was unwilling, in preparing for the press, to remove; on the contrary adding to it rather, in the hope of obtaining thus a somewhat wider circle of readers than I could have hoped, had I more rigidly restricted myself in the choice of my materials. Yet I

should greatly regret to have admitted so much of this as should deprive these lectures of their fitness for those whose profit in writing and in publishing I had mainly in view, namely, schoolmasters and those preparing to be such.

Had I known any book entering with any fulness, and in a popular manner, into the subject-matter of these pages, and making it its exclusive theme, I might still have delivered these lectures, but should scarcely have sought for them a wider audience than their first, gladly leaving the matter in their hands, whose studies in language had been fuller and riper than my own. But abundant and ready to hand as are the materials for such a book, I did not ; while yet it seems to me that the subject is one to which it is beyond measure desirable that their attention, who are teaching, or shall have hereafter to teach, others should be directed ; so that they shall learn to regard language as one of the chiefest organs of their own education and that of others. For I am persuaded that I have used no exaggeration in saying, that for many a young man 'his first discovery that words are living powers, has been like the dropping of scales from his eyes, like the acquiring of another sense, or the introduction into a new world,'—

while yet all this may be indefinitely deferred, may, indeed, never find place at all, unless there is some one at hand to help for him, and to hasten the process; and he who so does, will ever after be esteemed by him as one of his very foremost benefactors. Whatever may be Horne Tooke's shortcomings (and they are great), whether in details of etymology, or in the philosophy of grammar, or in matters more serious still, yet, with all this, what an epoch in many a student's intellectual life has been his first acquaintance with *The Diversions of Purley*. And they were not among the least of the obligations which the young men of our time owed to Coleridge, that he so often himself weighed words in the balances, and so earnestly pressed upon all with whom his voice went for anything, the profit which they would find in so doing. Nor, with the certainty that I am anticipating much in my little volume, can I refrain from quoting some words which were not present with me during its composition, although I must have been familiar with them long ago; words which express excellently well why it is that these studies profit so much, and which will also explain the motives which induced me to add my little contribution to their furtherance:

‘ A language will often be wiser, not merely than the vulgar, but even than the wisest of those who speak it. Being like amber in its efficacy to circulate the electric spirit of truth, it is also like amber in embalming and preserving the relics of ancient wisdom, although one is not seldom puzzled to decipher its contents. Sometimes it locks up truths, which were once well known, but which, in the course of ages, have passed out of sight and been forgotten. In other cases it holds the germs of truths, of which, though they were never plainly discerned, the genius of its framers caught a glimpse in a happy moment of divination. A meditative man cannot refrain from wonder, when he digs down to the deep thought lying at the root of many a metaphorical term, employed for the designation of spiritual things, even of those with regard to which professing philosophers have blundered grossly ; and often it would seem as though rays of truth, which were still below the intellectual horizon, had dawned upon the imagination as it was looking up to heaven. Hence they who feel an inward call to teach and enlighten their countrymen, should deem it an important part of their duty to draw out the stores of thought which are already latent in

their native language, to purify it from the corruptions which Time brings upon all things, and from which language has no exemption, and to endeavour to give distinctness and precision to whatever in it is confused, or obscure, or dimly seen.'—*Guesses at Truth, First Series*, p. 295.

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THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF WORDS

ON
THE STUDY OF WORDS.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

THERE are few who would not readily acknowledge that mainly in worthy books are preserved and hoarded the treasures of wisdom and knowledge which the world has accumulated ; and that chiefly by aid of these they are handed down from one generation to another. I shall urge on you in these lectures something different from this ; namely, that not in books only, which all acknowledge, nor yet in connected oral discourse, but often also in words contemplated singly, there are boundless stores of moral and historic truth, and no less of passion and imagination, laid up—that from these, lessons of infinite worth may be derived, if only our attention is roused to their existence. I shall urge on you (though with teaching such as you enjoy, the subject will not be new), how well it will repay you to study the words which

you are in the habit of using or of meeting, be they such as relate to highest spiritual things, or our common words of the shop and the market, and of all the familiar intercourse of life. It will indeed repay you far better than you can easily believe. I am sure, at least, that for many a young man his first discovery of the fact that words are living powers, are the vesture, yea, even the body, which thoughts weave for themselves, has been like the dropping of scales from his eyes, like the acquiring of another sense, or the introduction into a new world; he is never able to cease wondering at the moral marvels that surround him on every side, and ever reveal themselves more and more to his gaze.

We indeed hear it not seldom said that ignorance is the mother of admiration. No falser word was ever spoken, and hardly a more mischievous one; implying, as it does, that this healthiest exercise of the mind rests, for the most part, on a deceit and a delusion, and that with better knowledge it would cease; while, in truth, for once that ignorance leads us to admire that which with fuller insight we should perceive to be a common thing, and one therefore demanding no such tribute from us, a hundred, nay, a thousand times, it prevents us from admiring that which is admirable indeed. And this is so, whether we are moving in the region of nature, which is the region of God's wonders, or in the region of art, which is the

region of man's wonders; and nowhere truer than in this sphere and region of language, which is about to claim us now. Oftentimes here we walk up and down in the midst of intellectual and moral marvels with a vacant eye and a careless mind, even as some traveller passes unmoved over fields of fame, or through cities of ancient renown—unmoved, because utterly unconscious of the lofty deeds which there have been wrought, of the great hearts which spent themselves there. We, like him, wanting the knowledge and insight which would have served to kindle admiration in us, are oftentimes deprived of this pure and elevating excitement of the mind, and miss no less that manifold instruction which ever lies about our path, and nowhere more largely than in our daily words, if only we knew how to put forth our hands and make it our own. 'What riches,' one exclaims, 'lie hidden in the vulgar tongue of our poorest and most ignorant. What flowers of paradise lie under our feet, with their beauties and their parts undistinguished and undiscerned, from having been daily trodden on.'

And this subject upon which we are thus entering ought not to be a dull or uninteresting one in the handling, or one to which only by an effort you will yield the attention which I shall claim. If it shall prove so, this I fear must be through the fault of my manner of treating it; for certainly in itself there is no study which

may be made at once more instructive and entertaining than the study of the use and abuse, the origin and distinction of words, with an investigation, slight though it may be, of the treasures contained in them; which is exactly that which I now propose to myself and to you. I remember a very learned scholar, to whom we owe one of our best Greek lexicons, a book which must have cost him years, speaking in the preface of his completed work with a just disdain of some, who complained of the irksome drudgery of such toils as those which had engaged him so long,—toils irksome, forsooth, because they only had to do with words; disclaiming any part with those who thus asked pity for themselves, as though they were so many galley-slaves chained to the oar, or martyrs who had offered themselves for the good of the literary world. He declares that the task of classing, sorting, grouping, comparing, tracing the derivation and usage of words, had been to him no drudgery, but a delight and labour of love.

And if this may be true in regard of a foreign tongue, how much truer ought it to be in regard of our own, of our ‘mother tongue,’ as we affectionately call it. A great writer not very long departed from us has borne witness at once to the pleasantness and profit of this study. ‘In a language,’ he says, ‘like ours, where so many words are derived from other languages, there are few modes of instruction more useful or

more amusing than that of accustoming young people to seek for the etymology or primary meaning of the words they use. There are cases in which more knowledge of more value may be conveyed by the history of a word than by the history of a campaign.'

And, implying the same truth, a popular American author has somewhere characterised language as 'fossil poetry.' He evidently means that just as in some fossil, curious and beautiful shapes of vegetable or animal life, the graceful fern or the finely vertebrated lizard, such as now, it may be, have been extinct for thousands of years, are permanently bound up with the stone, and rescued from that perishing which would have otherwise been theirs,—so in words are beautiful thoughts and images, the imagination and the feeling of past ages, of men long since in their graves, of men whose very names have perished, these, which would so easily have perished too, preserved and made safe for ever. The phrase is a striking one ; the only fault which one might be tempted to find with it is, that it is too narrow. Language may be, and indeed is, this 'fossil poetry ;' but it may be affirmed of it with exactly the same truth that it is fossil ethics, or fossil history. Words quite as often and as effectually embody facts of history, or convictions of the moral common sense, as of the imagination or passion of men ; even as, so far as that moral sense may be perverted,

they will bear witness and keep a record of that perversion. On all these points I shall enter at full in after lectures; but I may give by anticipation a specimen or two of what I mean, to make from the first my purpose and plan more fully intelligible to all.

Language then is fossil poetry; in other words, we are not to look for the poetry which a people may possess only in its poems, or its poetical customs, traditions, and beliefs. Many a single word also is itself a concentrated poem, having stores of poetical thought and imagery laid up in it. Examine it, and it will be found to rest on some deep analogy of things natural and things spiritual; bringing those to illustrate and to give an abiding form and body to these. The image may have grown trite and ordinary now; perhaps through the help of this very word may have become so entirely the heritage of all, as to seem little better than a commonplace; yet not the less he who first discerned the relation, and devised the new word which should express it, or gave to an old, never before but literally used, this new and figurative sense, this man was in his degree a poet—a maker, that is, of things which were not before, which would not have existed but for him, or for some other gifted with equal powers. He who spake first of a ‘dilapidated’ fortune, what an image must have risen up before his mind’s eye of some falling

house or palace, stone detaching itself from stone, till all had gradually sunk into desolation and ruin. Or he who to that Greek word which signifies 'that which will endure to be held up to and judged by the sunlight,' gave first its ethical signification of 'sincere,' 'truthful,' or as we sometimes say 'transparent,' can we deny to him the poet's feeling and eye? Many a man had gazed, we are sure, at the jagged and indented mountain ridges of Spain, before one called them 'sierras' or 'saws,' the name by which now they are known, as *Sierra Morena*, *Sierra Nevada*; but that man coined his imagination into a word which will endure as long as the everlasting hills which he named.

But it was said just now that words often contain a witness for great moral truths—God having pressed such a seal of truth upon language, that men are continually uttering deeper things than they know, asserting mighty principles, it may be asserting them against themselves, in words that to them may seem nothing more than the current coin of society. Thus to what grand moral purposes Bishop Butler turns the word 'pastime;' how solemn the testimony which he compels the world, out of its own use of this word, to render against itself—obliging it to own that its amusements and pleasures do not really satisfy the mind and fill it with the sense of an abiding and satisfying

joy ;* they are only ‘pastime ;’ they serve only, as this word confesses, to *pass* away the *time*, to prevent it from hanging, an intolerable burden, on men’s hands : all which they can do at the best is to prevent men from discovering and attending to their own internal poverty and dissatisfaction and want. He might have added that there is the same acknowledgment in the word ‘diversion,’ which means no more than that which *diverts* or turns us aside from ourselves, and in this way helps us to forget ourselves for a little. And thus it would appear that, even according to the world’s own confession, all which it proposes is—not to make us happy, but a little to prevent us from remembering that we are unhappy, to *pass* away our *time*, to divert us from

* *Sermon* xiv. *Upon the Love of God*. Curiously enough, Montaigne has, in his *Essays*, drawn the same testimony out of the word: ‘This ordinary phrase of Pass-time, and passing away the time, represents the custom of those wise sort of people, who think they cannot have a better account of their lives, than to let them run out and slide away, to pass them over and to baulk them, and as much as they can, to take no notice of them and to shun them, as a thing of troublesome and contemptible quality. But I know it to be another kind of thing, and find it both valuable and commodious even in its latest decay, wherein I now enjoy it, and nature has delivered it into our hands in such and so favourable circumstances that we commonly complain of ourselves, if it be troublesome to us or slide unprofitable away.’

ourselves. While on the other hand we declare that the good which will really fill our souls and satisfy them to the uttermost, is not in us, but without us and above us, in the words which we use to set forth any transcending delight. Take three or four of these words—‘transport,’ ‘rapture,’ ‘ravishment,’ ‘ecstasy,’—‘transport,’ that which *carries* us, as ‘rapture,’ or ‘ravishment,’ that which *snatches* us out of and above ourselves; and ‘ecstasy’ is very nearly the same, only drawn from the Greek.

And not less, where a perversion of the moral sense has found place, words preserve oftentimes a record of this perversion. We have a signal example of this, in the use, or rather misuse, of the word ‘religion,’ during all the ages of Papal domination in Europe. A ‘religious’ person did not mean any one who felt and allowed the bonds that bound him to God and to his fellow-men, but one who had taken peculiar vows upon him, a member of one of the monkish orders; a ‘religious’ house did not mean, nor does it now mean in the Church of Rome, a Christian household, ordered in the fear of God, but a house in which these persons were gathered together according to the rule of some man. A ‘religion’ meant not a service of God, but a monastic order; and taking the monastic vows was termed going into a ‘religion.’ What a light does this one word so used throw on the entire state of mind and habits of thought in those ages! That then was

‘religion,’ and nothing else was deserving of the name! And ‘religious’ was a title which might not be given to parents and children, husbands and wives, men and women fulfilling faithfully and holily in the world the several duties of their stations, but only to those who had devised such a self-chosen service for themselves.*

But language is fossil history as well. What a record of great social revolutions, revolutions in nations and in the feelings of nations, the one word ‘frank’ contains, which is used, as we all know, to express aught that is generous, straightforward, and free. The Franks, I need not remind you, were a powerful German tribe, or association of tribes, who gave themselves this proud name of the ‘franks’ or the free; and who, at the breaking up of the Roman Empire, possessed themselves of Gaul, to which they gave their own name. They were the ruling conquering people, honourably distinguished from the Gauls and degenerate Romans among whom

* A reviewer in *Fraser's Magazine*, Dec. 1851, doubts whether I have not here pushed my assertion too far. So far from this, it was not merely the ‘popular language’ which this corruption had invaded, but a decree of the great Fourth Lateran Council (A.D. 1215), forbidding the further multiplication of monastic Orders, runs thus: *Ne nimia religionum diversitas gravem in Ecclesiâ Dei confusionem inducat, firmiter prohibemus, ne quis de cetero novam religionem inveniat, sed quicumque voluerit ad religionem converti, unam de approbatis assumat.*

they established themselves by their independence, their love of freedom, their scorn of a lie ; they had, in short, the virtues which belong to a conquering and dominant race in the midst of an inferior and conquered one. And thus it came to pass that by degrees the name 'frank' indicated not merely a national, but involved a moral, distinction as well ; and a 'frank' man was synonymous not merely with a man of the conquering German race, but was an epithet applied to any man possessed of certain high moral qualities, which for the most part appertained to, and were found only in, men of that stock ; and thus in men's daily discourse, when they speak of a person as being 'frank,' or when they use the words 'franchise,' 'enfranchisement,' to express civil liberties and immunities, their language here is the outgrowth, the record, and the result of great historic changes, bears testimony to facts of history, whereof it may well happen that the speakers have never heard.* The word 'slave' has undergone a process entirely analogous, although in an opposite direction. 'The martial superiority of the Teutonic races enabled them to keep their slave markets supplied with captives taken from the Slavonic

* 'Frank,' though thus originally a German word, only came back to Germany from France in the seventeenth century. With us it is found in the sixteenth ; but scarcely earlier.

tribes. Hence, in all the languages of Western Europe, the once glorious name of Slave has come to express the most degraded condition of man. What centuries of violence and warfare does the history of this word disclose.*

Having given by anticipation this handful of examples in illustration of what in these lectures I propose, I will, before proceeding further, make a few observations on a subject, which, if we would go at all to the root of the matter, we can scarcely leave altogether untouched,—I mean the origin of language; in which however we will not entangle ourselves deeper than we need. There are, or rather there have been, two theories about this. One, and that which rather has been than now is, for few maintain it still, would put language on the same level with the various arts and inventions with which man has gradually adorned and enriched his life. It would make him by degrees to have invented it, just as he might have invented any of these, for himself; and from rude imperfect beginnings, the inarticulate cries by which he expressed his natural wants, the sounds by which he sought to imitate the impression of natural objects upon him, little by little to have arrived at that wondrous organ of thought and feeling, which his language is often to him now.

* Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, p. 441; cf. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, c. 55.

It might, I think, be sufficient to object to this explanation, that language would then be an *accident* of human nature ; and, this being the case, that we certainly should somewhere encounter tribes sunken so low as not to possess it ; even as there is almost no human art or invention so obvious, and as it seems to us so indispensable, but there are those who have fallen below its knowledge and its exercise. But with language it is not so. There have never yet been found human beings, not the most degraded horde of South-African bushmen, or Papuan cannibals, who did not employ this means of intercourse with one another. But the more decisive objection to this view of the matter is, that it hangs together with, and is indeed an essential part of, that theory of society, which is contradicted alike by every page of Genesis, and every notice of our actual experience—the ‘urang-utang theory,’ as it has been so happily termed—that, I mean, according to which the primitive condition of man was the savage one, and the savage himself the seed out of which in due time the civilized man was unfolded ; whereas, in fact, so far from being this living seed, he might more justly be considered as a dead withered leaf, torn violently away from the great trunk of humanity, and with no more power to produce anything nobler than himself out of himself, than that dead withered leaf to unfold itself into the oak of the forest.

So far from being the child with the latent capabilities of manhood, he is himself rather the man prematurely aged, and decrepit, and outworn.

But the truer answer to the inquiry how language arose, is this: God gave man language, just as He gave him reason, and just because He gave him reason; for what is man's *word* but his *reason*, coming forth that it may behold itself? They are indeed so essentially one and the same that the Greek language has one word for them both. He gave it to him, because he could not be man, that is, a social being, without it. Yet this must not be taken to affirm that man started at the first furnished with a full-formed vocabulary of words, and as it were with his first dictionary and first grammar ready-made to his hands. He did not thus begin the world *with names*, but *with the power of naming*: for man is not a mere speaking machine; God did not teach him words, as one of us teaches a parrot, from without; but gave him a capacity, and then evoked the capacity which He gave. Here, as in everything else that concerns the primitive constitution, the great original institutes, of humanity, our best and truest lights are to be gotten from the study of the three first chapters of Genesis; and you will observe that there it is not God who imposed the first names on the creatures, but Adam—Adam, however, at the direct suggestion of his Creator. *He* brought them all, we are told, to Adam, 'to see what he

would call them ; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof' (Gen. ii. 19). Here we have the clearest intimation of the origin, at once divine and human, of speech ; while yet neither is so brought forward as to exclude or obscure the other.

And so far we may concede a limited amount of right to those who have held a progressive acquisition, on man's part, of the power of embodying thought in words. I believe that we should conceive the actual case most truly, if we conceived this power of naming things and expressing their relations, as one laid up in the depths of man's being, one of the divine capabilities with which he was created : but one (and in this differing from those which have produced in various people various arts of life) which could not remain dormant in him, for man could be only man through its exercise ; which therefore did rapidly bud and blossom out from within him at every solicitation from the world without, or from his fellow-man ; as each object to be named appeared before his eyes, each relation of things to one another arose before his mind. It was not merely the possible, but the necessary, emanation of the spirit with which he had been endowed. Man makes his own language, but he makes it as the bee makes its cells, as the bird its nest ; he cannot do otherwise.*

* Renan has much of interest on this matter, both in his work *De l'Origine du Langage*, and in his *Hist. des*

How this latent power evolved itself first, how this spontaneous generation of language came to pass, is a mystery, even as every act of creation is of necessity such ; and as a mystery all the deepest inquirers into the subject are content to leave it. Yet we may perhaps a little help ourselves to the realizing of what the process was, and what it was not, if we liken it to the growth of a tree springing out of, and unfolding itself from, a root, and according to a necessary law—that root being the divine capacity of language with which man was created, that law being the law

Langues Sémitiques. I quote from the latter, p. 445: ‘ Sans doute les langues, comme tout ce qui est organisé, sont sujettes à la loi du développement graduel. En soutenant que le langage primitif possédait les éléments nécessaires à son intégrité, nous sommes loin de dire que les mécanismes d’un âge plus avancé y fussent arrivés à leur pleine existence. Tout y était, mais confusément et sans distinction. Le temps seul et les progrès de l’esprit humain pouvaient opérer un discernement dans cette obscure synthèse, et assigner à chaque élément son rôle spécial. La vie, en un mot, n’était ici, comme partout, qu’à la condition de l’évolution du germe primitif, de la distribution des rôles et de la séparation des organes. Mais ces organes eux-mêmes furent déterminés dès le premier jour, et depuis l’acte générateur qui le fit être, le langage ne s’est enrichi d’aucune fonction vraiment nouvelle. Un germe est posé, renfermant en puissance tout ce que l’être sera un jour ; le germe se développe, les formes se constituent dans leurs proportions régulières, ce qui était en puissance devient en acte ; mais rien ne se crée, rien ne s’ajoute : telle est la loi commune des êtres soumis aux conditions de la vie. Telle fut aussi la loi du langage.’

of highest reason with which he was endowed: if we liken it to this rather than to the rearing of a house, which a man should slowly and painfully fashion for himself with dead timbers combined after his own fancy and caprice; and which little by little improved in shape, material, and size, being first but a log house, answering his barest needs, and only after centuries of toil and pain growing for his sons' sons into a stately palace for pleasure and delight.

Were it otherwise, were the savage the primitive man, we should then find savage tribes furnished, scantily enough, it might be, with the elements of speech, yet at the same time with its fruitful beginnings, its vigorous and healthful germs. But what does their language on close inspection prove? In every case what they are themselves, the remnant and ruin of a better and a nobler past. Fearful indeed is the impress of degradation which is stamped on the language of the savage, more fearful perhaps even than that which is stamped upon his form. When wholly letting go the truth, when long and greatly sinning against light and conscience, a people has thus gone the downward way, has been scattered off by some violent catastrophe from those regions of the world which are the seats of advance and progress, and driven to its remote isles and further corners, then as one nobler thought, one spiritual idea after another has perished from it, the words also that ex-

pressed these have perished too. As one habit of civilization has been let go after another, the words which those habits demanded have dropped as well, first out of use, and then out of memory, and thus after a while have been wholly lost.

Moffat, in his *Missionary Labours and Scenes in South Africa*, gives us a very remarkable example of the disappearing of one of the most significant words from the language of a tribe sinking ever deeper in savagery ; and with the disappearing of the word, of course, the disappearing as well of the great spiritual fact and truth whereof that word was at once the vehicle and the guardian. The Bechuanas, a Caffre tribe, employed formerly the word 'Morimo,' to designate 'Him that is above,' or 'Him that is in heaven,' and attached to the word the notion of a supreme Divine Being. This word, with the spiritual idea corresponding to it, Moffat found to have vanished from the language of the present generation, although here and there he could meet with an old man, scarcely one or two in a thousand, who remembered in his youth to have heard speak of 'Morimo ;' and this word, once so deeply significant, only survived now in the spells and charms of the so-called rain-makers and sorcerers, who misused it to designate a fabulous ghost, of whom they told the absurdest and most contradictory things.

And as there is no such witness to the degradation of the savage as the brutal poverty of his

language, so is there nothing that so effectually tends to keep him in the depths to which he has fallen. You cannot impart to any man more than the words which he understands either now contain, or can be made, intelligibly to him, to contain. Language is as truly on one side the limit and restraint of thought, as on the other side that which feeds and unfolds thought. Thus it is the ever-repeated complaint of the missionary that the very terms are well-nigh or wholly wanting in the dialect of the savage whereby to impart to him heavenly truths; and not these only; but that there are equally wanting those which should express the nobler emotions of the human heart. Dobrizhoffer, the Jesuit missionary, in his curious *History of the Abipones*, tells us that neither these nor the Guarinies, two of the principal native tribes of Brazil, possessed any word in the least corresponding to our 'thanks.' But what wonder, if the feeling of gratitude was entirely absent from their hearts, that they should not have possessed the corresponding word in their vocabularies? Nay, how should they have had it there? And that in this absence lies the true explanation is plain from a fact which the same writer records, that, although inveterate askers, they never showed the slightest sense of obligation or of gratitude, when they obtained what they sought; never saying more than, 'This will be useful to me,' or, 'This is what I wanted.' Dr. Krapf, after laborious

researches in some widely extended dialects of East Africa, has remarked in them the same absence of any words expressing the idea of gratitude.

Nor is it only in what they have forfeited and lost, but also in what they have retained or invented, that these languages proclaim their degradation and debasement, and how deeply they and those that speak them have fallen. For indeed the strange wealth and the strange poverty, I know not which the strangest and the saddest, of the languages of savage tribes, rich in words which proclaim their shame, poor in those which should attest the workings of any nobler life among them, not seldom absolutely destitute of these last, is a mournful and ever-recurring surprise, even to those who were in part prepared to expect nothing else. Thus I have read of a tribe in New Holland, which has no word to signify God, but has one to designate a process by which an unborn child may be destroyed in the bosom of its mother.* And I have been

* A Wesleyan missionary, communicating with me from Fiji, assures me I have here understated the case. He says: 'I could write down several words, which express as many different ways of killing an unborn child.' He has at the same time done me the favour to send me dreadful confirmation of all which I have here asserted. It is a list of some Fiji words, with the hideous meanings which they bear, or facts which they imply. He has naturally confined himself to those in one domain of

informed, on the authority of one excellently capable of knowing, an English scholar long resident in Van Diemen's Land, that in the native language of that island there are four words to express the taking of human life—one to express a father's killing of a son, another a son's killing of a father, with other varieties of murder; and that in no one of these lies the slightest moral reprobation, or sense of the deep-lying distinction between to 'kill' and to 'murder;' while at the same time, of that language so richly and so fearfully provided with expressions for this

human wickedness—that, namely, of cruelty; leaving another domain, which borders close on this, and which, he assures me, would yield proofs quite as terrible, altogether untouched. It is impossible to imagine a record more hideous of what the works of the arch-murderer are, or one more fitted to stir up missionary zeal in behalf of those dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty. A very few specimens must suffice. The language of Fiji has a word for a club which has killed a man; for a dead body which is to be eaten; for the first of such bodies brought in at the beginning of a war; for the flesh on each side of the backbone. It has a name of honour given to those who have taken life; it need not have been the life of an enemy; if only they have shed blood—it may have been the life of a woman or a child—the title has been earned. It has an hideous word to express the torturing and insulting of an enemy, as by cutting off any part of his body—his nose or tongue, for instance—roasting and eating it before his face, and taunting him the while; the ἀκρωτηριάζειν of the Greeks, but with the cannibalism added. But of this enough.

extreme utterance of hate, he also reports that a word for 'love' is wanting in it altogether. Yet with all this, ever and anon in the midst of this wreck and ruin, there is that in the language of the savage, some subtle distinction, some curious allusion to a perished civilization, now utterly unintelligible to the speaker; or some other note, which proclaims his language to be the remains of a dissipated inheritance, the rags and remnants of a robe which was a royal one once. The fragments of a broken sceptre are in his hand, a sceptre wherewith once he held dominion (he, that is, in his progenitors) over large kingdoms of thought, which now have escaped wholly from his sway.*

But while it is thus with him, while this is the downward course of all those that have chosen the downward path, while with every impoverishing and debasing of personal and national life there goes hand in hand a corresponding impoverishment and debasement of language; so

* See on this matter Tylor, *Early History of Mankind*, pp. 150-190; and, still better, the Duke of Argyll, *On Primeval Man*. Among some of the Papuans the faintest rudiments of the family survive; of the tribe no trace whatever; while yet of these one has lately written:—
'Sie haben religiöse Gebräuche und Uebungen, welche, mit einigen anderen Erscheinungen in ihrem Leben, mit ihrem jetzigen Culturzustande ganz unvereinbar erscheinen, wenn man darin nicht die Spuren einer früher höhern Bildung erkennen will.'

on the contrary, where there is advance and progress, where a divine idea is in any measure realizing itself in a people, where they are learning more accurately to define and distinguish, more truly to know, where they are ruling, as men ought to rule, over nature, and compelling her to give up her secrets to them, where new thoughts are rising up over the horizon of a nation's mind, new feelings are stirring at a nation's heart, new facts coming within the sphere of its knowledge, there will language be growing and advancing too. It cannot lag behind; for man feels that nothing is properly his own, that he has not secured any new thought, or entered upon any new spiritual inheritance, till he has fixed it in language, till he can contemplate it, not as himself, but as his word; he is conscious that he must express truth, if he is to preserve it, and still more if he would propagate it among others. 'Names,' as it has been excellently said, 'are impressions of sense, and as such take the strongest hold upon the mind, and of all other impressions can be most easily recalled and retained in view. They therefore serve to give a point of attachment to all the more volatile objects of thought and feeling. Impressions that when past might be dissipated for ever, are by their connexion with language always within reach. Thoughts, of themselves, are perpetually slipping out of the field of immediate mental vision; but the name abides

with us, and the utterance of it restores them in a moment.'

Men sometimes complain of the number of new theological terms which the great controversies in which the Church from time to time has been engaged, have left behind them; but this could not be otherwise, unless the gains through those controversies made, were presently to be lost again; for as has lately been well said: 'The success and enduring influence of any systematic construction of truth, be it secular or sacred, depends as much upon an exact terminology, as upon close and deep thinking itself. Indeed, unless the results to which the human mind arrives are plainly stated, and firmly fixed in an exact phraseology, its thinking is to very little purpose in the end. "Terms," says Whewell, "record discoveries." That which was seen, it may be with crystal clearness, and in bold outline, in the consciousness of an individual thinker, may fail to become the property and possession of mankind at large, because it is not transferred from the individual to the general mind, by means of a precise phraseology and a rigorous terminology. Nothing is in its own nature more fugacious and shifting than thought; and particularly thoughts upon the mysteries of Christianity. A conception that is plain and accurate in the understanding of the first man becomes obscure and false in that of the second, because it was not

grasped and firmly held in the form and proportions with which it first came up, and then handed over to other minds, a fixed and scientific quantity.' * And on the necessity of names for the propagation of truth it has been justly observed: 'Hardly any original thoughts on mental or social subjects ever make their way among mankind, or assume their proper proportions in the minds even of their inventors, until aptly selected words or phrases have as it were nailed them down and held them fast.' And this holds good alike of the false and of the true. The whole controversy of the Catholic Church with the Arians finally gathers itself up in a single word, 'homoousion;' that with the Nestorians in another, 'theotokos.' One might be bold to affirm that the entire secret of Buddhism is in the 'Nirvâna.' Take away the word, and it is not too much to say that the keystone to the whole arch is gone. So too when the mediæval Church invented and allowed the word 'transubstantiation' (and we know exactly the date when it did so), it committed itself to a doctrine from which henceforward it was impossible to recede. The floating error had become a fixed one, and exercised a far mightier influence on the minds of all who received it, than except for this it would have ever done. It is sometimes

* Shedd, *History of Christian Doctrine*, vol. i. p. 362; compare *Guesses at Truth*, 1866, page 217.

not a word, but a phrase, which proves thus mighty in operation. 'Reformation in the head and in the members' was the watchword, for nearly a century before an actual Reformation came, of all who were conscious of the deep needs of the Church. What intelligent acquaintance with Darwin's speculations would the world in general have made, except for two or three happy and comprehensive terms, as 'the struggle for existence,' 'the survival of the fittest,' 'the process of natural selection'? Multitudes who else would have known nothing about Comte's system, know something about it when they know that he called it 'the positive philosophy.'

We have been tempted to depart a little, though a very little, from the subject immediately before us. What was just now said of the manner in which language enriches itself does not contradict a prior assertion, that man starts with language as God's perfect gift, which he only impairs and forfeits by sloth and sin, according to the same law which holds good in respect of each other of the gifts of heaven. For it was not meant, as indeed was then observed, that men would possess words to set forth feelings which were not yet stirring in them, combinations which they had not yet made, objects which they had not yet seen, relations of which they were not yet conscious; but that up to his needs, (those needs including

not merely his animal wants, but all his higher spiritual cravings,) he would find utterance freely. The great logical, or grammatical, framework of language, (for grammar is the logic of speech, even as logic is the grammar of reason,) he would possess, he knew not how ; and certainly not as the final result of gradual acquisitions, and of reflexion setting these in order, and drawing general rules from them ; but as that rather which alone had made those acquisitions possible ; as that according to which he unconsciously worked, filled in this framework by degrees with these later acquisitions of thought, feeling, and experience, as one by one they arrayed themselves in the garment and vesture of words.

Here then is the explanation of the fact that language should be thus instructive for us, that it should yield us so much, when we come to analyze and probe it ; and yield us the more, the more deeply and accurately we do so. It is full of instruction, because it is the embodiment, the incarnation, if I may so speak, of the feelings and thoughts and experiences of a nation, yea, often of many nations, and of all which through long centuries they have attained to and won. It stands like the pillars of Hercules, to mark how far the moral and intellectual conquests of mankind have advanced, only not like those pillars, fixed and immovable, but ever itself advancing with the progress of these. The mighty moral instincts which have been working

in the popular mind have found therein their unconscious voice ; and the single kinglier spirits that have looked deeper into the heart of things have oftentimes gathered up all they have seen into some one word, which they have launched upon the world, and with which they have enriched it for ever—making in that new word a new region of thought to be henceforward in some sort the common heritage of all. Language is the amber in which a thousand precious and subtle thoughts have been safely embedded and preserved. It has arrested ten thousand lightning flashes of genius, which, unless thus fixed and arrested, might have been as bright, but would have also been as quickly passing and perishing, as the lightning. ‘ Words convey the mental treasures of one period to the generations that follow ; and laden with this, their precious freight, they sail safely across gulfs of time in which empires have suffered shipwreck, and the languages of common life have sunk into oblivion.’ And for all these reasons far more and mightier in every way is a language than any one of the works which may have been composed in it. For that work, great as it may be, is but the embodying of the mind of a single man, this of a nation. The *Iliad* is great, yet not so great in strength or power or beauty as the Greek language.* *Paradise Lost* is a noble

* On the Greek language and its merits, as compared with the other Indo-Germanic languages, see Curtius, *History of Greece*, English translation, vol. i. pp. 18–28.

possession for a people to have inherited, but the English tongue is a nobler heritage yet.

And imperfectly as we may apprehend all this, there is an obscure sense, or instinct I might call it, in every one of us, of this truth. We all, whether we have given a distinct account of the matter to ourselves or not, believe that words which we use are not arbitrary and capricious signs, affixed at random to the things which they designate, for which any other might have been substituted as well, but that they stand in a real relation to these. And this sense of the significance of names, that they are, or ought to be,—that in a world of absolute truth they ever would be,—the expression of the innermost character and qualities of the things or persons that bear them, speaks out in various ways. It is reported of Boiardo, author of a poem without which we should probably have never seen the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto, that he was out hunting, when the name Rodomonte presented itself to him as exactly fitting a foremost person of the epic he was composing ; and that instantly returning home, he caused all the joy-bells of the village to be rung, to celebrate the happy invention. This story may remind us of another which is told of the greatest French novelist of modern times. A friend of Balzac's, who has written some *Recollections* of him, assures us that he would sometimes wander for days through the streets of Paris, studying the names over the shops, as being

sure that there was a name more appropriate than any other to some character which he had conceived, and hoping to light on it there.

You must all have remarked the amusement and interest which children find in any notable agreement between a name and the person who owns that name—or, which naturally takes a still stronger hold upon them, in any manifest contradiction between the name and the name-bearer; as, for instance, if Mr. Strongitharm is a weakling, or Mr. Black an albino: the former striking from a sense of fitness, the latter from one of incongruity. Nor is this a mere childish entertainment. It continues with us through life; and that its roots lie deep is attested by the earnest use which is often made, and that at the most earnest moments of men's lives, of such agreements or disagreements as these. 'Call me not Naomi,' exclaims the desolate widow—'call me not Naomi [or *pleasantness*]; call me Marah [or *bitterness*], for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.' She cannot bear that the name she bears should so strangely contradict the thing she is. Shakespeare, in like manner, reveals his own profound knowledge of the human heart, when he makes old John of Gaunt, worn with long sickness, and now ready to depart, play with his name, and dwell upon the consent between it and his condition; so that, when his royal nephew asks him, 'How is it with aged Gaunt?' he answers,

‘Oh, how that name befits my composition,
Old *Gaunt* indeed, and *gaunt* in being old—
Gaunt am I for the grave, *gaunt* as the grave—’*

with much more in the same fashion ; while it is into the mouth of the slight and frivolous king that Shakespeare puts the exclamation of wonder,

‘Can sick men play so nicely with their names?’

Thus too, if one be engaged in a controversy or quarrel, and his name import something good, an adversary will lay hold of the name, will seek to bring out a real contradiction between it and its bearer, so that he shall appear as one presenting himself under false colours, affecting a merit which he does not really possess. Examples of this are innumerable. For instance, there was one Vigilantius in the early Church ;—his name might be interpreted ‘The Watchful.’ He was engaged in a controversy with St. Jerome, about certain vigils ; which he thought perilous to Christian morality, but of which Jerome was a very eager promoter ; who instantly gave a turn to his name, and proclaimed that he, the enemy of these watches, the friend of slumber and sloth, should have been not Vigilantius, or ‘The

* Ajax, or Αἴας, in the play of Sophocles, which bears his name, does the same with the αἰ αἷ which lies in that name (422, 423) ; just as in the *Bacchæ* of Euripides, not Pentheus himself but others for him indicate the prophecy of a mighty πένθος or grief, which is shut up in his name.

Watcher,' but Dormitanti^{us}, or 'The Sleeper,' rather. The Spanish peasantry during the Peninsular War would not hear of Buonaparte, but constantly changed the name to 'Malaparte,' as designating better the perfidious kidnapper of their king and enemy of their independence. It will be seen then that the Greek poet is most true to nature, when in his *Prometheus Bound* he makes Strength tauntingly to remind Prometheus, or The Prudent, how ill his name and the lot which he has made for himself agree; bound as he is with adamant^{ine} chains to his rock, and bound, as it might seem, for ever. When Napoleon said of Count Lobau, whose proper name was Mouton, 'Mon mouton c'est un lion,' it was the same instinct at work, though working from an opposite point. It made itself felt no less in the bitter irony which gave to the brother-murdering king the title of Philadelphus.

But this hostile use of names, this attempt to place them and their owners in the most intimate connexion, to make, so to speak, the man answerable for his name, we trace still more frequently where the name does not thus need to be reversed; but may be made as it now is, or with very slightest change, to contain a confession of the ignorance, worthlessness, or futility of the bearer. If it implies, or can be made to imply, anything bad, it is instantly laid hold of as expressing the very truth about him. You know the story of Helen of Greece, whom in two of

his 'mighty lines' Marlowe's Faust so magnificently apostrophises :

'Is this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burned the topless towers of Ilium?'

It is no frigid conceit of the Greek poet, when passionately denouncing the ruin which she wrought, he finds that ruin couched and fore-announced in her name* as in English it might be, and has been, reproduced—

'*Hell* in her name, and heaven in her looks.'

Pope Hildebrand, in our *Homilies*, is styled 'Brand of Hell,' as setting the world in a blaze; Sanders, the foul-mouthed libeller of Queen Elizabeth, is with more of justice by old Fuller styled 'Slanders rather.' Tott and Teuffel were two officers of high rank in the army with which Gustavus Adolphus invaded Germany. It was presently said by the other side that he had brought 'death' and 'hell' with him. There were two not inconsiderable persons in our Civil Wars, Vane (not the 'young Vane' of Milton's and Wordsworth's sonnets) and Sterry; and one of these, Sterry, was chaplain to the other. Baxter, having occasion to mention them in his profoundly instructive *Narrative of his Life and Times*, and liking neither, cannot forbear to observe, that '*vanity* and *sterility* were never more

* 'Ελένας [= ἐλέναος], ἑλάνδρος, ἐλέπτολις, Æschylus, *Agamemnon*, 636.

suitably joined together ;' and speaks in another place of 'the vanity of Vane, and the sterility' (this latter charge is an eminently unjust one) 'of Sterry.' *

* A few more examples, in a note, of this contumely of names. Antiochus Epiphanes, or 'the Illustrious,' is for the Jews, whom he so madly attempted to hellenize, Antiochus Epimanes, or 'the Insane.' Cicero, denouncing Verres, the infamous prætor of Sicily, is too skilful a master of the passions to allow the name of the criminal to escape him. He was indeed Verres, for he *swept* the province ; he was a *sweep-net* for it (everriculum in provinciâ) ; and then presently, giving altogether another turn to his name, Others, he says, might be partial to 'jus verrinum' (which might mean either Verrine law or boar-sauce), but not he. Tiberius Claudius Nero, charged with being a drunkard, becomes in the popular language Biberius Caldius Mero. The controversies of the Church with heretics yield only too abundant a supply, and that upon both sides, of examples in this kind. The 'royal-hearted' Athanasius is Satanasius for the Arians ; and some of St. Cyprian's adversaries did not shrink from so foul a perversion of his name as to call him Κοπριανός, or 'the Dungy.' But then, on the other hand, how often is Pelagius declared by the Church Fathers to be an ocean, a pelagus, of wickedness. It was in vain that the Manichæans changed their master's name from Manes to Manichæus, that so it might not so nearly resemble the word signifying madness in the Greek (devitantes nomen insanix, Augustine, *De Hær.* 46) ; it did not thereby escape. Cardinal Clesel was active in setting forward the Roman Catholic reaction in Bohemia at the beginning of the seventeenth century. It was a far-fetched and not very happy piece of revenge, when they of the other side took pleasure in spelling his name CL esel, as much as to say, He of the 150 ass power. Metrophanes, a Patriarch

Where, on the other hand, it is desired to do a man honour, how gladly, in like manner, is his name seized on, if it any way bears an honourable significance, or is capable of an honourable interpretation—men finding in that name a presage and prophecy, an indication and out-speaking, of that which was actually in its bearer. A multitude of examples, many of them beautiful enough, might be brought together in this kind. How often, for instance, and with what effect, the name of Stephen the proto-martyr, that name signifying ‘the Crown,’ was taken as a prophetic intimation of the martyr-crown, which it should be given to him, the first in that noble army, to wear.* Irenæus means in Greek ‘the Peaceable;’ and early Church writers love to remark how fitly the great bishop of Lyons bore this name, setting forward as he

of Constantinople, being counted to have betrayed the interests of the Greek Church, his spiritual mother, in certain negotiations with the Latin, saw his name changed into Metrophonos, or ‘the Matricide.’ Mahomet is Bafomet in Provençal, from bafa, a falsehood; just as Shechem, a chief city of the heretical Samaritans, became Sychar, or city of lies (see John iv. 5), on the lips of hostile Jews. It would be curious to know how often the Sorbonne has been likened to a Serbonian bog.

* Thus in a great Latin hymn:—

‘Nomen habes *Coronati*;

Te tormenta decet pati

Pro *coronâ* gloriæ.’

On these ‘prophetic’ names in the heathen world see Pott, *Wurzel-Wörterbuch*, vol. ii. part 2, p. 522.

so eminently did the peace of the Church, resolved as he was, so far as in him lay, to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The Dominicans were well pleased when their name was resolved into 'Domini canes'—the Lord's watch-dogs; who, as such, allowed no heresy to appear without at once giving the alarm, and seeking to chase it away. Fuller, our own Church historian, who played so often on the names of others, has a play made upon his own in some commendatory verses affixed to one of his books :

'Thy style is clear and white; thy very name
Speaks pureness, and adds lustre to the frame.'

He plays himself upon it in an epigram which takes the form of a prayer:

'My soul is stained with a dusky colour:
Let thy Son be the soap; I'll be the fuller.'

John Careless, whose letters are among the most beautiful in Fox's *Book of Martyrs*, writing to Philpot, exclaims, 'Oh good master Philpot, which art a principal pot indeed, filled with much precious liquor,—oh pot most happy! of the High Potter ordained to honour.'

Herein, in this faith that men's names were true and would come true, in this, and not in any altogether unreasoning superstition, lay the root of the carefulness of the Romans that in the enlisting of soldiers names of good omen, such as Valerius, Salvius, Secundus, should

be the first called. There is a tale in Roman history of an expedition which was to go forward led by an Atrius Umber, and of the soldiers absolutely refusing to proceed under a commander of so ill-omened a name. So strong is the conviction of men that names are powers. Nay, it must have been sometimes thought that the good name might so react on the evil nature that it should not remain evil altogether, but might be induced, in part at least, to conform itself to the designation which it bore. Here we have an explanation of the title Eumenides, or the Well-minded, given to the Furies, of Euxine, or the good to strangers, to the inhospitable Black Sea, and in modern Greek of εὐλογία, or 'the blessing,' to the smallpox!

Let me observe, before leaving this subject, that not in one passage only, but in passages innumerable, Scripture sets its seal to this significance of names, to the fact that the seeking and the finding of this significance is not a mere play upon the surface of things; it everywhere recognizes the inner band, which ought to connect, and in a world of truth would connect, together the name and the person or thing bearing the name. Scripture sets its seal to this by the weight and solemnity which it everywhere attaches to the imposing of names; this in many instances not being left to hazard, but assumed by God as his own peculiar care. 'Thou shalt call his name Jesus' (Matt. i. 21; Luke i. 31) is

of course the most illustrious instance of all ; but there are a multitude of other cases in point ; names given by God, as that of John to the Baptist ; or changed by Him, as Abram's to Abraham, Sarai's to Sarah, and Hoshea's to Joshua ; or new names added by Him to old, when by some mighty act of faith the man had been lifted out of his old life into a new ; as Israel added to Jacob, and Peter to Simon, and Sons of thunder to the two sons of Zebedee.

But we must draw to a close. Enough has been said to attest and to justify the wide-spread faith of men that names are significant, and that things and persons correspond, or ought to correspond, to them. You will not, then, find it a laborious task to persuade your pupils to admit as much. They are prepared to accept, they will be prompt to believe it. And great indeed will be our gains, their gains and ours,—for teacher and taught will for the most part enrich themselves together,—if, having these treasures of wisdom and knowledge lying round about us, so far more precious than mines of Californian gold, we determine that we will make what portion of them we can our own, that we will ask the words which we use to give an account of themselves, to say whence they are, and whither they tend. Then shall we often rub off the dust and rust from what seemed to us but a common token, which as such we had taken and given a thousand times ; but which now we

shall perceive to be a precious coin, bearing the 'image and superscription' of the great King: then shall we often stand in surprise and in something of shame, while we behold the great spiritual realities which underlie our common speech, the marvellous truths which we have been witnessing *for* in our words, but, it may be, witnessing *against* in our lives. And as you will not find, for so I venture to promise, that this study of words will be a dull one when you undertake it yourselves, as little need you fear that it will prove dull and unattractive, when you seek to make your own gains herein the gains also of those who may be hereafter committed to your charge. Only try your pupils, and mark the kindling of the eye, the lighting up of the countenance, the revival of the flagging attention, with which the humblest lecture upon words, and on the words especially which they are daily using, which are familiar to them at their play or at their church, will be welcomed by them. There is a sense of reality about children which makes them rejoice to discover that there is also a reality about words, that they are not merely arbitrary signs, but living powers; that, to reverse the words of one of England's 'false prophets,' they may be the fool's counters, but are the wise man's money; not, like the sands of the sea, innumerable disconnected atoms, but growing out of roots, clustering in families, connecting and intertwining themselves with all that men

have been doing and thinking and feeling from the beginning of the world till now.

And it is of course our English tongue, out of which mainly we should seek to draw some of the hid treasures which it contains, from which we should endeavour to remove the veil which custom and familiarity have thrown over it. We cannot employ ourselves better. There is nothing that will more help than will this to form an English heart in ourselves and in others. We could scarcely have a single lesson on the growth of our English tongue, we could scarcely follow up one of its significant words, without having unawares a lesson in English history as well, without not merely falling on some curious fact illustrative of our national life, but learning also how the great heart which is beating at the centre of that life was gradually shaped and moulded. We should thus grow too in our feeling of connexion with the past, of gratitude and reverence to it ; we should estimate more truly, and therefore more highly, what it has done for us, all that it has bequeathed us, all that it has made ready to our hands. It was something for the children of Israel, when they came into Canaan, to enter upon wells which they digged not, and vineyards which they had not planted, and houses which they had not built ; but how much greater a boon, how much more glorious a prerogative, for any one generation to enter upon the inheritance of a language

which other generations by their truth and toil have made already a receptacle of choicest treasures, a storehouse of so much unconscious wisdom, a fit organ for expressing the subtlest distinctions, the tenderest sentiments, the largest thoughts, and the loftiest imaginations, which the heart of man should at any time conceive. And that those who have preceded us have gone far to accomplish this for us, I shall rejoice if I am able in any degree to make you feel in the lectures which will follow the present.

LECTURE II.

ON THE POETRY IN WORDS.

I SAID in my last lecture, or rather I quoted another who had said, that language is fossil poetry. It is true that for us very often this poetry which is bound up in words has in great part or altogether disappeared. We fail to recognize it, partly from long familiarity with it, partly from insufficient knowledge, partly, it may be, from never having had our attention called to it. None have pointed it out to us; we may not ourselves have possessed the means of detecting it; and thus it has come to pass that we have been close to this wealth, and yet it has not been ours. Margaret has not been for us 'the Pearl,' nor Esther 'the Star,' nor Susanna 'the Lily,'* nor Stephen 'the Crown,' nor Albert or Albrecht 'the All-bright.' 'In our ordinary language,' as Montaigne has well said, 'there are several excellent phrases and meta-

* See Jacob Grimm, *Ueber Frauennamen aus Blumen*, in his *Kleinere Schriften*, vol. ii. pp. 366-401; and on the subject of this paragraph more generally, Schleicher, *Die Deutsche Sprache*, p. 115 sqq.

phors to be met with, of which the beauty is withered by age, and the colour is sullied by too common handling ; but that takes nothing from the relish to an understanding man, neither does it derogate from the glory of those ancient authors, who, 'tis likely, first brought those words into that lustre.' We read in one of Molière's most famous comedies of one who was surprised to discover that he had been talking prose all his life without being aware of it. If we knew all, we might be much more surprised to find that we had been talking poetry, without ever having so much as suspected this. For indeed poetry and passion seek to insinuate, and do insinuate themselves everywhere in language ; they preside continually at the giving of names ; they enshrine and incarnate themselves in these. I shall devote my present lecture to a few examples and illustrations, by which I would make the truth of this which I have affirmed appear.

'Iliads without a Homer,' some one has called, with a little exaggeration, the beautiful but anonymous ballad poetry of Spain. One may be permitted, perhaps, to push the exaggeration a little further in the same direction, and to apply the same language not merely to a ballad but to a word. For poetry, which is passion and imagination embodying themselves in words, does not necessarily demand a *combination* of words for this. Of this passion and imagination a single word may be the vehicle. As the sun

can image itself alike in a tiny dewdrop or in the mighty ocean, and can do it, though on a different scale, as perfectly in the one as in the other, so the spirit of poetry can dwell in and glorify alike a word and an Iliad. Nothing in language is too small, as nothing is too great, for it to fill with its presence. Everywhere it can find, or, not finding, can make, a shrine for itself, which afterwards it can render translucent and transparent with its own indwelling glory. On every side we are beset with poetry. Popular language is full of it, of words used in an imaginative sense, of things called,—and not merely in transient moments of high passion, and in the transfer which at such moments finds place of the image to the thing imaged, but permanently,—by names having immediate reference not to what they are, but to what they are like.

Thus, for example, at Naples it is the ordinary language to call the lesser storm-waves ‘pecore,’ or sheep; the larger ‘cavalloni,’ or big horses. Who that has watched the foaming crests, the white manes, as it were, of the larger billows as they advance in measured order, and rank on rank, into the bay, but will own not merely the fitness, but the grandeur, of this last image? Let me illustrate my meaning more at length by the word ‘tribulation.’ We all know in a general way that this word, which occurs not seldom in Scripture and in the Liturgy, means affliction, sorrow, anguish; but it is quite worth our while

to know *how* it means this, and to question 'tribulation' a little closer. It is derived from the Latin 'tribulum,' which was the threshing instrument or harrow, whereby the Roman husbandman separated the corn from the husks; and 'tribulatio' in its primary significance was the act of this separation. But some Latin writer of the Christian Church appropriated the word and image for the setting forth of a higher truth; and sorrow, distress, and adversity being the appointed means for the separating in men of whatever in them was light, trivial, and poor from the solid and the true, their chaff from their wheat,* he therefore called these sorrows and trials 'tribulations,' threshings, that is, of the inner spiritual man, without which there could be no fitting him for the heavenly garner. Now in proof of my assertion that a single word is often a concentrated poem, a little grain of pure gold capable of being beaten out into a broad extent of gold-leaf, I will quote, in reference to this very word 'tribulation,' a graceful composition by George Wither, a poet of the seventeenth century. You will at once perceive that it is all wrapped up in this word, being from first to last only the explicit unfolding of the image and thought which this word has implicitly given; it is as follows:

* Triticum itself may be connected with tero, tritus.

‘Till from the straw the flail the corn doth beat,
Until the chaff be purgèd from the wheat,
Yea, till the mill the grains in pieces tear,
The richness of the flour will scarce appear.
So, till men’s persons great afflictions touch,
If worth be found, their worth is not so much,
Because, like wheat in straw, they have not yet
That value which in threshing they may get.
For till the bruising flails of God’s corrections
Have threshèd out of us our vain affections ;
Till those corruptions which do misbecome us
Are by Thy sacred Spirit winnowed from us ;
Until from us the straw of worldly treasures,
Till all the dusty chaff of empty pleasures,
Yea, till His flail upon us He doth lay,
To thresh the husk of this our flesh away ;
And leave the soul uncovered ; nay, yet more,
Till God shall make our very spirit poor,
We shall not up to highest wealth aspire ;
But then we shall ; and that is my desire.’

This deeper religious use of the word ‘tribulation’ was unknown to classical antiquity, belonging exclusively to the Christian writers : and the fact that the same deepening and elevating of the use of words recurs in a multitude of other, and many of them far more signal, instances, is one well deserving to be followed up. Nothing, I am persuaded, would more mightily convince us of the new power which Christianity proved in the world than to compare the meaning which so many words possessed before its rise, and the deeper meaning which they obtained, so soon as they were assumed as the vehicles of its life, the new thought and

feeling enlarging, purifying, and ennobling the very words which they employed. This is a subject which I shall have occasion to touch on more than once in these lectures, but is itself well worthy of, as it would afford ample material for, a volume.

On the suggestion of this word 'tribulation,' I will quote two or three words from Coleridge, bearing on the matter in hand. He has said, 'In order to get the full sense of a word, we should first present to our minds the visual image that forms its primary meaning.' What admirable counsel is here! If we would but accustom ourselves to the doing of this, what vast increases of precision and force would all the language which we speak, and which others speak to us, obtain; how often would that which is now obscure at once become clear; how distinct the limits and boundaries of that which is often now confused and confounded! It is difficult to measure the amount of food for the imagination, as well as gains for the intellect, which the observing of this single rule would afford us. Let me illustrate this by one or two examples. We say of such a man that he is 'desultory.' Do we attach any very distinct meaning to the word? Perhaps not. But get at the image on which 'desultory' rests; take the word to pieces; learn that it is from *de* and *salto*, 'to leap from one thing to another,' as a man who in the ring, technically called a 'desultor,' riding two or

three horses at once, leaps from one to the other, being never on the back of any one of them long ; take, I say, the word thus to pieces, and put it together again, and what a firm and vigorous grasp will you have now of its meaning ! A ‘desultory’ man is one who jumps from one study to another, and never continues for any length of time in one. Again, you speak of a person as ‘capricious,’ or as full of ‘caprices.’ But what exactly are caprices ? ‘Caprice’ is from *capra*, a goat. If ever you have watched a goat, you will have observed how sudden, how unexpected, how unaccountable, are the leaps and springs, now forward, now sideward, now upward, in which it indulges. A ‘caprice’ then is a movement of the mind as unaccountable, as little to be calculated on beforehand, as the springs and bounds of a goat. Is not the word so understood a far more picturesque one than it was before ? and is there not some real gain in the vigour and vividness of impression which is in this way obtained ?

The poetry which has been embodied in the names of places, in those names which designate the leading features of outward nature, promontories, mountains, capes, and the like, is very worthy of being elicited and evoked anew, latent as it now has oftentimes become. Nowhere do we so easily forget that names had once a peculiar fitness, which was the occasion of their giving. Colour has often suggested the name, as in the

well-known instance of our own 'Albion,'—'the silver-coasted isle,' as Tennyson so beautifully has called it,—which had this name from the white line of cliffs which it presents to those approaching it by the narrow seas. 'Himalaya' is 'the abode of snow.' Often, too, it is shape and configuration which is incorporated in the name, as in 'Trinacria,' or 'the three-promontoried land,' which was the Greek name of Sicily; in 'Drepanum,' or 'the sickle,' the name which a town on the N.W. promontory of the island bore, from the sickle-shaped tongue of land on which it was built. But more striking, as the embodiment of a poetical feeling, is the modern name of the great southern peninsula of Greece. We are all aware that it is called the 'Morea;' but we may not be so well aware from whence that name is derived. It had long been the fashion among ancient geographers to compare the shape of this region to a platane leaf;* and a glance at the map will show that the general outline of that leaf, with its sharply-incised edges, justified the comparison. This, however, had remained merely as a comparison; but at the shifting and changing of names, which went with the breaking up of the old Greek and Roman civilization, the resemblance of this region to a leaf, not now, however, a platane,

* Strabo, viii. 2; Pliny, *H. N.* iv. 5; Agathemerus, l. i. p. 15; ἔχειν δὲ ὅμοιον σχῆμα φύλλῳ πλατάνου.

but a mulberry leaf, appeared so strong, that it exchanged its old name of Peloponnesus for 'Morea,' which embodied men's sense of this resemblance, *morus* being a mulberry tree in Latin, and *μορέα* in Greek. This etymology of 'Morea' has been called in question;* but, as it seems to me, on no sufficient grounds. Deducing, as one objector does, 'Morea' from a Slavonic word, '*more*,' the sea, he finds in this derivation a support for his favourite notion that the modern population of Greece is not descended from the ancient, but consists in far the larger proportion of intrusive Slavonic tribes.

In other ways also the names of places will oftentimes embody some poetical aspect under which now or at some former period men learned to regard them. Oftentimes when discoverers come upon a new land they will seize with a firm grasp of the imagination the most striking feature which it presents to their eyes, and permanently embody this in a word. Thus the island of Madeira is now, I believe, nearly bare of wood; but its sides were covered with forests at the time when it was first discovered, and hence the name, 'madeira' in Portuguese having this meaning of wood. Some have said that the first Spanish discoverers of Florida gave it this name from the rich carpeting of flowers which,

* By Fallmerayer, *Gesch. der Halbinsel Morea*, pp. 240 sqq.; and by Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, p. 398.

at the time when first their eyes beheld it, everywhere covered the soil.* Surely Florida, as the name passes under our eye, or from our lips, is something more than it was before, when we may thus think of it as the land of flowers.† We

* But see on this point Isaac Taylor, *Words and Places*, p. 13.

† An Italian poet, Fazio degli Uberti, tells us that Florence has its appellation from the same cause :

‘ Poichè era posta in un prato di fiori,
Le denno il nome bello, onde s’ ingloria.’

It would be instructive to draw together a collection of etymologies which have been woven into verse. These are so little felt to be alien to the spirit of poetry, that they exist in large numbers, and often lend to the poem in which they find a place a charm and interest of their own. In five lines of *Paradise Lost* Milton introduces four such etymologies, namely, those of the four fabled rivers of hell, though this will sometime escape the notice of the English reader:

‘ Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly *hate*,
Sad Acheron of *sorrow*, black and deep,
Cocytus, named of *lamentation* loud
Heard on the rueful stream ; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent *fire* inflame with rage.’

‘ That great master of the proprieties,’ Virgil, as Bishop Pearson has so happily called him, does not shun, but rather loves to introduce them, as witness his etymology of Byrsa, *Æn.* i. 367, 368 ; v. 59, 63 ; of ‘ Latium,’ with reference to Saturn having remained *latent* there (*Æn.* viii. 322 ; cf. Ovid, *Fasti* i. 238):

‘ Latiumque vocari
Maluit, his quoniam *latuisset* tutus in oris.’

have heard something of Port Natal lately, probably we shall in coming years hear still more. The name also embodies an interesting fact, namely, that this port was first discovered on Christmas Day, the *dies natalis* of our Lord.

Then again what poetry is there, as indeed there ought to be, in the names of flowers! I do not speak of those, the exquisite grace and beauty of whose names is forced on us so that we cannot miss it, such as 'meadow-sweet,' 'eye-bright,' 'sun-dew,' 'forget-me-not,' 'Venus' looking-glass,' 'queen-of-the-meadows,' 'love-in-idleness,' 'reine marguerite,' 'gilt-cup' (a local name for the butter-cup, drawn from the golden gloss of its petals), 'cuckoo flower,' blossoming as this orchis does when the cuckoo is first heard, 'herb

And again of 'Avernus' = ἄορνος (*Æn.* vi. 243); being indeed in this anticipated by Lucretius (vi. 741):

'quia sunt avibus contraria cunctis.'

Ovid's taste is very far from faultless, and his example cannot go for much; but he is always a graceful versifier, and his *Fasti* swarm with etymologies, correct and incorrect; as of 'Lemures' (v. 479-484), of 'Februarius' (ii. 19-22) of 'Aprilis' (iv. 89), of 'senatus' (v. 64), of 'majestas' (v. 26), of 'Orion' (v. 535), of 'Janus' (i. 120-127), of 'Augustus' (i. 609-614), of 'Agonalis' (i. 322), of 'Lucina' (ii. 449), of 'victima' (i. 335), of 'hostia' (i. 336), of 'pecunia' (v. 280, 281). He has them also elsewhere, as of 'Tomi' (*Trist.* iii. 9, 33). Lucilius, in like manner, gives us the etymology of 'iners':

'Ut perhibetur iners, ars in quo non erit ulla.'

of grace,' and the like ; but take ' daisy ; ' surely this charming little English flower, which has stirred the peculiar affection of English poets from Chaucer to Wordsworth, and received the tribute of their song, becomes more charming yet when we know, as Chaucer long ago has told us, that ' daisy ' is day's eye, the eye of day ; these are his words :

' That well by reason it men callen may
The *daisie*, or else the eye of day.'

For only consider how much is implied here. To the sun in the heavens this name, eye of day, was naturally first given, and those who transferred the title to our little field flower meant no doubt to liken its inner yellow disk or shield to the great golden orb of the sun, and the white florets which encircle this disk to the rays which the sun spreads on all sides around him. What imagination was here, to suggest a comparison such as this, binding together as this does the smallest and the greatest ! what a travelling of the poet's eye, with the power which is the privilege of that eye, from earth to heaven, and from heaven to earth, and of linking both together. Call up before your mind's eye the 'lavish gold' of the drooping laburnum when in flower, and you will recognize the poetry of the title 'the golden rain,' which in German it bears. 'Celandine' does not so clearly tell its own tale ; and it is only when you have investigated the *χελιδόνιον*,

of which 'celandine' is the English representative, that the word will yield up the poetry which is concealed in it.

And then again, what poetry is there often in the names of birds and beasts and fishes, and indeed of all the animated world around us ; how skilfully are these names adapted to bring out the most striking and characteristic features of the object to which they are given. Thus when the Romans became acquainted with the stately giraffe, long concealed from them in the interior deserts of Africa, (which we learn from Pliny they first did in the shows exhibited by Julius Cæsar,) it was happily imagined to designate a creature combining, though with infinitely more grace, yet something of the height and even the proportions of the *camel* with the spotted skin of the *pard*, by a name which should incorporate both these its most prominent features,* calling it the 'camelopard.' Nor can we, I think, hesitate to accept that account as the true one, which describes the word as no artificial creation of the scientific naturalist, but as bursting extempore from the lips of the populace, who after all are the true namers, at the first moment when the novel creature was presented to their gaze. 'Cerf-volant,' a name which the French have so

* Varro: Quod erat figurâ ut camelus, maculis ut panthera ; and Horace (*Ep.* ii. 1, 196):

Diversum confusa genus panthera camelo.

happily given to the horned scarabeus, the same which we somewhat less poetically call the 'stag-beetle,' is another example of what may be effected with the old materials, by merely bringing them into new and happy combinations.

The butterfly is in Spanish 'mariposa.' The derivation is curious, if it may be trusted, and one who has good right to be heard in the matter adduces it with confidence.* Nothing in the butterfly is so striking as the alternations of restless movement while it is on the wing, and then of perfect quiet when it has lighted. He divides the word thus, 'mar-i-posa,' or 'sea and rest;' first the restless agitation as of the sea, and this presently exchanged for perfect repose, and finds here a key to the explanation of a word which has hitherto perplexed all etymologists.

You know the appearance of the lizard, and the *star*-like shape of the spots which are sown over its back. Well, in Latin it is called 'stellio,' from *stella*, a star; just as the basilisk had in Greek the name of 'little king' because of the shape as of a *kingly* crown which the spots on its head might be made by the fancy to assume. Need I remind you of our own 'goldfinch,' evidently so called from that bright patch of yellow on its wing; our 'kingfisher,' having its name from the royal beauty, the kingly splendour of the plumage with which it is adorned? The

* Mahn, *Etymol. Forschungen*, p. 9.

lady-bird or lady-cow is prettily named, as indeed the whole legend about it is full of grace and fancy ; but a common name which in many of our country parts it bears, the 'golden knop,' is prettier still. And indeed in our country dialects there is a wide poetical nomenclature which is well worthy of recognition ; thus the shooting lights of the Aurora Borealis are in Lancashire the Merry Dancers ; clouds piled up in a particular fashion are in many parts styled Noah's Ark ; the puff-ball is the Devil's snuff-box ; the dragon-fly the Devil's darning-needle ; a large black beetle the Devil's coach-horse. Any one who has watched the kestrel hanging poised in the air, before it swoops upon its prey, will acknowledge the faithfulness of the name 'windhover,' or sometimes 'windfanner,' which it bears.

The amount is very large of curious legendary lore which is everywhere bound up in words, and which they, if duly solicited, will give back to us again. For example, the Greek 'halcyon,' which we have adopted without change, has reference, and wraps up in itself an allusion, to one of the most beautiful and significant legends of heathen antiquity ; according to which the sea preserved a perfect calmness for all the period, the fourteen 'halcyon days,' during which this bird was brooding over her nest. The poetry of the name survives, whether the name suggested the legend, or the legend the name. Take again

the names of some of our precious stones, as of the topaz, so called, as some said, because men were only able to *conjecture* (τοπάζειν) the position of the cloud-concealed island from which it was brought.* But more graceful than all these is the legend which clings to the 'gossomer' or God's summer, and which speaks out most distinctly in the name 'Marien-fäden,' which in German it bears—namely, that this gossomer is the remnant of Our Lady's winding-sheet, which fell away in these lightest fragments, as she was assumed into heaven.

Very curious is the determination which some words, indeed many, seem to manifest, that their poetry shall not die ; or, if it dies in one form, that it shall revive in another. Thus if there is danger that, transferred from one language to another, they shall no longer speak to the imagination of men as they did of old, they will make to themselves a new life, they will acquire a new soul in the room of that which has ceased to quicken and inform them any more. Let me make clear what I mean by one or two examples. The Germans, knowing nothing of carbuncles, had naturally no word of their own for them ; and when they first found it necessary to name them, as naturally borrowed the Latin 'carbunculus,' which originally had meant 'a little live coal,' to designate these precious stones of a fiery

* Pliny, *H. N.* xxxvii. 32.

red. But 'carbunculus,' a real word, full of poetry and life, for a Latin, would have been only an arbitrary sign for as many as were ignorant of that language. What then did they, or what, rather, did the working genius of the language, do? It adopted, but in adopting, modified slightly yet effectually the word, changing it into 'Karfunkel,' thus retaining the outlines of the original, yet at the same time, inasmuch as 'funkeln' signifies 'to sparkle,' reproducing now in an entirely novel manner the image of the bright sparkling of the stone, for every knower of the German tongue.

Take another illustration of this from another quarter. The French 'rossignol,' a nightingale, is undoubtedly the Latin 'lusciniola,' the diminutive of 'luscinia,' with the alteration so frequent in the Romance languages, of the commencing *l* into *r*. Whatever may be the etymology of 'luscinia,' whether it be 'in lucis cano,' the singer in the groves, or 'lugens cano,' the mourning singer, or 'in lucem cano,' the singer until dawn, or, most probably, 'luscus cano,' the weak-eyed and therefore twilight singer, with which our 'nightingale' would most closely correspond, it is plain that for Frenchmen in general the word would no longer suggest any one of these meanings, hardly even for French scholars, after the serious transformations which it had undergone; while yet, at the same time, in the exquisitely musical 'rossignol,' and still more perhaps in the

Italian 'usignuolo,' there is an evident intention and endeavour to express something of the music of the bird's song in the liquid melody of the imitative name which it bears; and thus to put a new soul into the word, in lieu of that other which had died out. Whatever may be the meaning of Senlac, the name of that field where the great battle, now more commonly called the Battle of Hastings, was fought, it certainly was not 'Sanglac,' or Lake of Blood; the word only shaping itself into this form subsequently to the battle, and in consequence of it.

I must add one example more of the perishing of the old life in a word, and the birth of a new in its stead. Every one who has visited Lucerne in Switzerland must remember the rugged mountain called 'Mont de Pilate' or 'Pilate's mountain,' which stands opposite to him; and if he has been among the few who care to climb it, will have been shown by his guide the lake at its summit in which Pontius Pilate in his despair drowned himself, with an assurance that from this the mountain obtained its name. Nothing of the kind. 'Mont de Pilate' was originally '*Mon's Pileatus*,' 'the *hatted* hill;' the clouds, as one so often sees, gathering round its summit, and forming the shape and appearance of a turban or hat. When in the Middle Ages this true derivation was forgotten or misunderstood, the other was invented and imposed. An instructive example this, let me observe by the

way, of that which has happened continually in far older legends; I mean that the name has suggested the legend, and not the legend the name.

I have said that poetry and imagination seek to penetrate everywhere; and this is literally true; for even the hardest, austere studies cannot escape their influence; they will put something of their own life into the dry bones of a nomenclature which seems the remotest from them, the most opposed to them. He who in prosody called a metrical foot consisting of one long syllable followed by two short (- ~ ~) a 'dactyle' or a finger, with allusion to the long first joint of the finger, and the two shorter which follow, whoever he may have been, and some one was the first to do it, must be allowed to have brought a certain amount of imagination into a study so alien to it as prosody very well might appear.

He did the same in another not very poetical region who invented the Latin law-term, 'stellionatus.' The word includes all such legally punishable acts of swindling or injurious fraud committed on the property of another as are not specified in any more precise enactment; being drawn and derived from a practice attributed, I suppose without any foundation, to the lizard or 'stellio' we spoke of just now. Having cast its winter skin, it is reported to swallow it at once, and this out of a malignant grudge lest any

should profit by that which, if not now, was of old accounted a sure specific in certain diseases. The term was then transferred to any malignant wrong done by one person to another.

In other regions it was only to be expected that we should find poetry. Thus it is nothing strange that architecture, which has been called frozen music, and which is poetry embodied in material forms, should have a language of its own, not dry nor hard, not of the mere intellect alone, but one in the forming of which it is evident that the imaginative faculties were at work. To take only one example—this, however, from Gothic art, which naturally yields the most remarkable—what exquisite poetry in the name of ‘the rose window,’ or better still, ‘the rose,’ given to the rich circular aperture of stained glass, with its leaf-like compartments, in the transepts of a Gothic cathedral! Here indeed we may note an exception from that which usually finds place; for usually art borrows beauty from nature, and very faintly, if at all, reflects back beauty upon her. In this present instance, however, art is so beautiful, has reached so glorious and perfect a development, that if the associations which the rose supplies lend to that window some hues of beauty and a glory which otherwise it would not have, the latter abundantly repays the obligation; and even the rose itself may become lovelier still, associated with those shapes of grace, those rich

gorgeous tints, and all the religious symbolism of that in art which has borrowed and bears its name. After this it were little to note the imagination, although that was most real, which dictated the term 'flamboyant' to express the wavy flame-like outline, which, at a particular period of art, the tracery in the Gothic window assumed.

'Godsacre,' or 'Godsfield,' is the German name for a burial-ground, and once was our own, though we unfortunately have nearly, if not quite, let it go. What a hope full of immortality does this little word proclaim; how rich is it in all the highest elements of poetry, and of poetry in its noblest alliance, that is, in its alliance with faith—able as it is to cause all loathsome images of decay and dissolution to disappear, not denying them, but suspending, losing, absorbing them in the sublimer thought of the victory over death, of that harvest of life which God shall one day so gloriously reap even there where now seems the very triumphing place of death.

Lastly let me note the pathos of poetry which lies often in the mere tracing of the succession of changes in meaning which certain words have undergone. Thus 'elend' in German, a beautiful word, now signifies wretchedness, but at first it signified exile or banishment. The sense of this separation from the native land and from all home delights as being the woe of all woes, the crown of all sorrow, little by little so penetrated

the word, that what at first expressed only one form of misery, has ended by signifying all. It is not a little notable, as showing the same feeling elsewhere at work, that 'essil' (=exilium) in old French signified, not as one might have expected, banishment, but ruin.

Let us then acknowledge man a born poet. If not every man always himself a 'maker,' yet evermore able to rejoice in what others have made, adopting it freely, moving gladly in it as his own most congenial element and sphere. For indeed, as man does not live by bread alone, as little does he seek in language merely the instrument which shall put him in such relations with his fellow men as shall enable him to buy and sell and get gain, or otherwise make provision for the lower necessities of his animal life; but something rather which shall also stand in a real relation and correspondence to the higher faculties of his being, shall feed, nourish, and sustain these, shall stir him with images of beauty and suggestions of greatness. Neither here nor anywhere else could he become the mere utilitarian even if he would. Despite his utmost efforts, were he mad enough to employ them, he could not succeed in exhausting his language of the poetical element which is inherent in it; he could not succeed in stripping it of blossom, flower, and fruit, and leaving it nothing but a bare and naked stem. He may fancy for a moment that he has succeeded in doing this;

but it will only need for him to become a little better philologist, to go a little deeper into the study of the words which he is using, and he will discover that he is as remote from this miserable consummation as ever.

For ourselves, let us desire nothing of the kind. Our life is not in other ways so full of imagination and poetry that we need give any diligence to empty it of that which it possesses of these. It will always have for us all enough of dull and prosaic and commonplace. What profit can there be in seeking to extend the region of these? Profit there would be none, but on the contrary infinite loss. It is *stagnant* waters which corrupt themselves; not those on which the breath and the winds of heaven are freely blowing. The words of passion and imagination are, as one so grandly called them of old, 'winds of the soul' (*ψυχῆς ἄνεμοι*), to keep it in healthful motion and agitation, to lift it upward and to drive it onward, to preserve it from that unwholesome stagnation which constitutes the fatal preparedness for so many other and worse evils.

LECTURE III.

ON THE MORALITY IN WORDS.

IS man of a divine birth and stock? coming from God, and, when he fulfils the law of his being, and the intention of his creation, returning to Him again? We need no more than the words he speaks to prove it; so much is there in them which could never have existed on any other supposition. How else could all those words which testify of his relation to God, and of his consciousness of this relation, and which ground themselves thereon, have found their way into this, the veritable transcript of his innermost life, the genuine utterance of the faith and hope which is in him? In what other way can we explain that vast and preponderating weight thrown into the scale of goodness and truth, which, despite of all in the other scale, we must thankfully acknowledge that language never is without? How else shall we account for that sympathy with the right, that testimony against the wrong, which, despite of all aberrations and perversions, is yet the prevailing ground-tone of all?

But has man fallen, and deeply fallen, from the heights of his original creation? We need no more than his language to prove it. Like everything else about him, it bears at once the stamp of his greatness and of his degradation, of his glory and of his shame. What dark and sombre threads he must have woven into the tissue of his life, before we could trace those threads of darkness which run through the tissue of his language! What facts of wickedness and woe must have existed in the one, ere such words could exist to designate these as are found in the other! There have never wanted those who would make light of the hurts which man has inflicted on himself, of the sickness with which he is sick; who would persuade themselves and others that moralists and divines, if they have not quite invented, have yet enormously exaggerated, these. But are statements to this effect found only in Scripture and in sermons? Are not mournful corroborations of their truth imprinted deeply upon every province of man's natural and spiritual life, and on none more deeply than on his language? It needs but to open a dictionary, and to cast our eye thoughtfully down a few columns, and we shall find abundant confirmation of this sadder and sterner estimate of man's moral and spiritual condition. How else shall we explain this long catalogue of words, having all to do with sin or with sorrow, or with both? How came they there? We may

be quite sure that they were not invented without being needed, and they have each a correlative in the world of realities. I open the first letter of the alphabet ; what means this ' Ah,' this ' Alas,' these deep and long-drawn sighs of humanity, which at once encounter me there? And then presently there meet me such words as these, ' Affliction,' ' Agony,' ' Anguish,' ' Assassin,' ' Atheist,' ' Avarice,' and a hundred more—words, you will observe, not laid up in the recesses of the language, to be drawn forth at rare opportunities, but many of them such as must be continually on the lips of men. And indeed, in the matter of abundance, it is sad to note how much richer our vocabularies are in words that set forth sins, than in those that set forth graces. When St. Paul (Gal. v. 19-23) would put these against those, ' the works of the flesh ' against ' the fruit of the Spirit,' those are seventeen, these only nine ; and where do we find in Scripture such lists of graces, as we do at 2 Tim. iii. 2, Rom. i. 29-31, of their contraries? *

Nor can I help noting, in the oversight and muster from this point of view of the words which constitute a language, the manner in which its utmost resources have been taxed to

* Of these last the most wonderful collection which I know is in Philo, *De Merced. Meret.* § 4. There are here one hundred and forty-six epithets brought together, each of them indicating a sinful moral habit of mind.

express the infinite varieties, now of human suffering, now of human sin. Thus, what a fearful thing is it that any language should possess a word to express the pleasure which men feel at the calamities of others ; for the existence of the word bears testimony to the existence of the thing. And yet such in more languages than one may be found.* Nor are there wanting, I suppose, in any language, words which are the mournful record of the strange wickednesses which the genius of man, so fertile in evil, has invented. What whole processes of cruelty are sometimes wrapped up in a single word ! Thus I have not gone down the first column of an Italian dictionary before I light upon the verb ‘*abbacinare*,’ meaning to deprive of sight by holding a red-hot metal basin close to the eyeballs. Travelling a little further in a Greek lexicon, I should reach *ἀκρωτηριάζειν*, to cut off all the extremities, hands, feet, nose, &c. And our dictionaries, while they tell us much, cannot tell us all. How shamefully rich is everywhere the language of the vulgar in words and phrases which, seldom allowed to find their way into books, yet live as a sinful oral tradition on the lips of men, to set forth things unholy and

* In the Greek, *ἐπιχαιρεκακία*, in the German, ‘*Schadenfreude*.’ Cicero so strongly feels the want of such a word, that he *gives* to ‘*malevolentia*’ the significance ‘*voluptas ex malo alterius*,’ which lies not of necessity in it.

impure. And of these words, as no less of those dealing with the kindred sins of revelling and excess, how many set the evil forth with an evident sympathy and approbation, and as taking part with the sin against Him who has forbidden it under pain of his highest displeasure. How much ability, how much wit, yes, and how much imagination must have stood in the service of sin, before it could possess a nomenclature so rich, so varied, and often so heaven-defying, as that which actually it owns.

How many words men have dragged downward with themselves, and made more or less partakers of their own fall. Having once an honourable significance, they have yet with the deterioration and degeneration of those that used them, or those about whom they were used, deteriorated and degenerated too. How many, harmless once, have assumed a harmful as their secondary meaning; how many worthy have acquired an unworthy. Thus 'knave' meant once no more than lad (nor does it now in German mean more); 'villain' than peasant; a 'boor' was a farmer, a 'varlet' a serving-man, which still survives in 'valet,' the other form of this word;* a 'menial' was one of the 'many' or household, a 'paramour' a lover, a 'minion' a favourite (man in *Sylvester* is 'God's dearest

* Yet this itself was an immense fall for the word. (See Ampère, *La Langue Française*, p. 219, and Littré, *Dict. de la Langue Française*, preface, p. xxv.)

minion'); a 'pedant' was in the Italian from which we borrowed the word, and for a while too with ourselves, simply a tutor; a 'swindler,' in German, one who entered into perilous mercantile speculations, without implying that this was done with any intention to defraud others; Christ, according to Bishop Hall, was the 'ringleader' of our salvation. 'Time-server' two hundred years ago quite as often designated one in an honourable as in a dishonourable sense 'serving the time.'* 'Conceits' had once nothing conceited in them. 'To carp' was no more than to converse. An 'officious' man was one prompt in offices of kindness, and not, as now, an uninvited meddler in things that concern him not. 'Demure' conveyed no hint, as it does now, of an overdoing of the outward demonstrations of modesty. In 'crafty' and 'cunning' no crooked wisdom was implied, but only knowledge and skill; 'craft,' indeed, still retains very often its more honourable use, a man's 'craft' being his skill, and then the trade in which he is skilled. 'Artful' too was skilful, and not tricky as now. Could the Magdalen have ever given us 'maudlin' in its present contemptuous application, if the tears of penitential sorrow had been held in due honour by the world? 'Tinsel,' the French '*étincelle*,' meant once anything that sparkled

* See in proof Fuller, *Holy State*, b. iii. c. 19.

or glistened; thus, 'cloth of *tinsel*' would be cloth inwrought with silver and gold; but the sad experience that 'all is not gold that glitters,' that much which shows fair and specious to the eye is yet worthless in reality, has caused that by 'tinsel,' literal or figurative, we ever mean now that which has no reality of sterling worth underlying the specious shows which it makes. 'Specious' itself, let me note, meant beautiful at one time, and not, as now, presenting a deceitful appearance of beauty. 'Tawdry,' which was applied formerly to lace or other finery bought at the fair of St. Awdrey or St. Etheldreda, has run through the same course: it at one time conveyed no suggestion of *mean* finery, or *shabby* splendour, as now it does. 'Voluble' was an epithet of honour, meaning what 'fluent' means now; 'plausible' was worthy of applause; 'lewd' no more than unlearned, as the lay or common people might be supposed to be.*

A like deterioration through use may be traced in the verb 'to resent.' Barrow could

* Having in mind what 'dirne,' connected with 'dienen,' 'dienst,' commonly means now in German, one almost shrinks from observing that it was once a name of honour which could be and was used of the Blessed Virgin Mary (see Grimm, *Wörterbuch*, s. v.). 'Schalk' in like manner had no evil subaudition in it at the first. Nor had it ever such during the time that it survived in English; thus in *Sir Gawayne and the Green Knight*, the peerless Gawayne is himself on more than one occasion a 'schalk' (424, 1776).

speak of the good man as a faithful 'resenter' and requiter of benefits, of the duty of testifying an affectionate 'resentment' of our obligations to God. But the memory of benefits fades from us so much more quickly than that of injuries; we remember and revolve in our minds so much more predominantly the wrongs, real or imaginary, men have done us, than the favours we owe them, that 'to resent' has come in our modern English to be confined exclusively to that deep reflective displeasure which men entertain against those that have done, or whom they believe to have done, them a wrong. And this explains how it comes to pass that we do not speak of the 'retaliation' of benefits at all so often as the 'retaliation' of injuries. 'To retaliate' signifies no more than to render again as much as we have received; but this is so much seldomer practised in regard of benefits than of wrongs, that 'retaliation,' though not altogether unused in this worthier sense, has yet, when so employed, an unusual sound in our ears. 'To retaliate' kindnesses is a language which would not now be intelligible to all. 'Animosity,' as originally employed in that later Latin which gave it birth, was spiritedness; men would speak of the 'animosity' or fiery courage of a horse. In our early English it meant nothing more; a divine of the seventeenth century speaks of 'due Christian animosity.' Activity and vigour are still implied

in the word ; but only as displayed in enmity and hate. There is a Spanish proverb which says, 'One foe is too many ; a hundred friends are too few.' The proverb and the course which this word has travelled appear to me mutually to illustrate one another.*

How mournful a witness for the hard and unrighteous judgments we habitually form of one another lies in the word 'prejudice.' It is itself absolutely neutral, meaning no more than a judgment formed beforehand ; which judgment may be favourable, or may be unfavourable. Yet so predominantly do we form harsh unfavourable judgments of others before knowledge and experience, that a 'prejudice,' or judgment before knowledge and not grounded on evidence, is almost always taken in an ill sense ; 'prejudicial' having actually acquired mischievous or injurious for its secondary meaning.

As these words bear testimony to the *sin* of man, so others to his *infirmity*, to the limitation of human faculties and human knowledge, to the truth of the proverb, 'Humanum est errare.' Thus 'to retract' means properly no more than to handle again, to reconsider. And yet, so certain are we to find in a subject which we re-

* For quotations from our earlier authors in proof of many of the assertions made in the few last pages, see my *Select Glossary of English Words used formerly in senses different from their present*, 3rd edit. 1865.

consider, or handle a second time, that which was at first rashly, imperfectly, inaccurately, stated, which needs therefore to be amended, modified, withdrawn, that 'to retract' could not tarry long in its primary meaning of reconsidering; but has come to signify to withdraw. Thus the greatest Father of the Latin Church, wishing at the close of his life to amend whatever he might then perceive in his various published works incautiously or incorrectly stated, gave to the book in which he carried out this intention (for authors had then no such opportunities as later editions afford now), this very name of '*Retractations*,' being literally 'rehandlings,' but in fact, as will be plain to any one turning to the work, withdrawals of various statements by which he was no longer prepared to abide.

But urging, as I just now did, the degeneration of words, I should seriously err, if I failed to remind you that a parallel process of purifying and ennobling has also been going forward, most of all through the influences of a Divine faith working in the world. This, as it has turned *men* from evil to good, or has lifted them from a lower earthly goodness to a higher heavenly, so has it in like manner elevated, purified, and ennobled a multitude of the words which they employ, until these, which once expressed only an earthly good, express now a heavenly. The Gospel of Christ, as it is the redemption of man,

so is it in a multitude of instances the redemption of his word, freeing it from the bondage of corruption, that it should no longer be subject to vanity, nor stand any more in the service of sin or of the world, but in the service of God and of his truth. Thus the Greek had a word for 'humility;' but for him this humility meant—that is, with rare exceptions—meanness of spirit. He who brought in the Christian grace of humility, did in so doing rescue the term which expressed it for nobler uses and a far higher dignity than hitherto it had attained. There were 'angels' before heaven had been opened, but these only earthly messengers; 'martyrs' also, or witnesses, but these not unto blood, nor yet for God's highest truth; 'apostles,' but sent of men; 'evangels,' but these good tidings of this world, and not of the kingdom of heaven; 'advocates,' but not 'with the father.' 'Paradise' was a word common in slightly different forms to almost all the nations of the East; but it was for them only some royal park or garden of delights; till for the Jew it was exalted to signify the wondrous abode of our first parents; and higher honours awaited it still, when on the lips of the Lord, it signified the blissful waiting-place of faithful departed souls (Luke xxiii. 43); yea, the heavenly blessedness itself (Rev. ii. 7). A 'regeneration,' or palingenesis, was not unknown to the Greeks: they could speak of the earth's 'regeneration' in spring-time, of recollection as

the 'regeneration' of knowledge ; the Jewish historian could describe the return of his countrymen from the Babylonian Captivity, and their re-establishment in their own land, as the 'regeneration' of the Jewish State. But still the word, whether as employed by Jew or Greek, was a long way off from that honour reserved for it in the Christian dispensation—namely, that it should be the vehicle of one of the most blessed mysteries of the faith. And many other words in like manner there are, 'fetched from the very dregs of paganism,' as Sanderson has it (he instances the Latin 'sacrament,' the Greek 'mystery'), which the Holy Spirit has not refused to employ for the setting forth of the glorious facts of our redemption ; and reversing the impious deed of Belshazzar, who profaned the sacred vessels of God's house to sinful and idolatrous uses (Dan. v. 2), has consecrated the very idol-vessels of Babylon to the service of the sanctuary.

Let us now proceed to contemplate some of the attestations to God's truth, and then some of the playings into the hands of the devil's falsehood, which lurk in words. And first, the attestations to God's truth, the fallings in of our words with his unchangeable Word : for these, as the true uses of the word, while the other are only its abuses, have a prior claim to be considered.

Thus, some modern 'false prophets,' willing to

explain away all such phenomena of the world around us as declare man to be a sinful being, and lying under the consequences of sin, would fain have us to believe that pain is only a subordinate kind of pleasure, or, at worst, a sort of needful hedge and guardian of pleasure. But a deeper feeling in the universal heart of man bears witness to quite another explanation of the existence of pain in the present economy of the world—namely, that it is the correlative of sin, that it is *punishment* ; and to this the word ‘pain,’ so closely connected with ‘*pœna*,’ bears witness. Pain is punishment ; for so the word, and so the conscience of every one that is suffering it, declares. There are those who will not hear of great pestilences being scourges of the sins of men ; who, if only they can find out the immediate, imagine that they have found out the ultimate, causes of these ; while yet these gainsayers have only to speak of a ‘plague’ and they implicitly avouch the very truth which they have set themselves to deny ; for a ‘plague,’ what is it but a stroke ; so called, because that universal conscience of men which is never at fault, has felt and thus confessed it to be such ? For here, as in so many other cases, that proverb stands fast, ‘*Vox populi, vox Dei* ;’ and may be admitted to the full ; that is, if only we keep in mind that this ‘people’ is not the populace either in high place or in low ; and this ‘voice of the people’ no momentary outcry, but the consenting

testimony of the good and wise, of those neither brutalized by ignorance, nor corrupted by a false cultivation, in many places and in many times.

To one who admits the truth of this proverb it will be nothing strange that men should have agreed to call him a 'miser' or miserable, who eagerly scrapes together and painfully hoards the mammon of this world. Here too the moral instinct lying deep in all hearts has borne testimony to the tormenting nature of this vice, to the gnawing pains with which even in this present time it punishes its votaries, to the enmity which there is between it and all joy; and the man who enslaves himself to his money is proclaimed in our very language to be a 'miser,' or miserable man.*

Other words bear testimony to great moral truths. St. James has, I doubt not, been often charged with exaggeration for saying, 'Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all' (ii. 10). The charge is an unjust one. The Romans said as much, as often as they used 'integritas;' we say the same who have adopted 'integrity,' as a part of

* 'Misery' and 'miserable' do not any longer signify avarice and avaricious; but these meanings they also once possessed (see my *Select Glossary*, s. vv.). In them we once said, and in 'miser' we still say, in one word what Seneca when he wrote,—'Nulla avaritia sine pœnâ est, quamvis satis sit ipsa pœnarum,'—took a sentence to say.

our ethical language. For what is 'integrity' but entireness ; the 'integrity' of the body being, as Cicero explains it, the full possession and the perfect soundness of *all* its members ; and moral 'integrity,' though it cannot be predicated so absolutely of any sinful child of Adam, is this same entireness or completeness transferred to things higher. 'Integrity' was exactly that which Herod had *not* attained, when at the Baptist's bidding he 'did many things gladly' (Mark vi. 20), but did *not* put away his brother's wife ; whose partial obedience therefore profited nothing ; he had dropped one link in the golden chain of obedience, and as a consequence the whole chain fell to the ground.

It is very noticeable, and many have noticed, that the Greek word signifying wickedness (*πονηρία*) comes of another signifying labour (*πόνος*). How well does this agree with those passages in Scripture which describe sinners as '*wearying themselves* to commit iniquity,' as '*labouring* in the very fire ;' 'the martyrs of the devil,' as South calls them, being at more pains to go to hell than the martyrs of God to go to heaven. 'St. Chrysostom's eloquence,' as Bishop Sanderson has observed, 'enlarges itself and triumphs in this argument more frequently than in almost any other ; and he clears it often and beyond all exception, both by Scripture and reason, that the life of a wicked or worldly man is a very drudgery infinitely more toil-

some, vexatious, and unpleasant than a godly life is.' *

Take another witness of words to a central truth of our faith. A deep-lying connexion, acknowledged by all, between sin and expiation, a profound conviction that sin requires expiation, cannot be forgiven till an atonement has been made, this, twining itself among the very roots of men's minds, has uttered itself in the words which they employ. Nowhere has it been traced more clearly than in the relation between 'Sünde' and 'sühnen,' the German words for 'sin' and 'to atone.' Some, indeed, have affirmed this relation to be merely fanciful, one, therefore, on which no conclusion could be grounded. But the scholar with best right to speak on the matter, does, after a full discussion, stand fast to this, that the connexion between 'sünde' and 'sühnen,' though not quite so close as sometimes assumed, is yet most real; that there thus lies in 'sin' the notion of something needing expiation. † As the great lines in which the human mind travels are still the same, we may recognize as confirming this conclusion the fact that 'piaculum' is the Latin for an enormous sin, or one which, *as such*, demands *expiation*.

How deep an insight into the failings of the human heart lies at the root of many words;

* *Sermons*, London, 1671, vol. ii. p. 244.

† J. Grimm, *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1839, pp. 747 sqq.

and, if only we would attend to them, what valuable warnings many contain against subtle temptations and sins! Thus, all of us have felt the temptation of seeking to please others by an unmanly *assenting* to their opinion, even when our own independent convictions did not agree with theirs. The existence of such a temptation, and the fact that too many yield to it, are both declared in the Latin for a flatterer—‘assentator’—that is, ‘an assenter;’ one who has not courage to say *No*, when a *Yes* is expected from him: and quite independently of the Latin, the German, in its contemptuous and precisely equivalent use of ‘Jaherr,’ a ‘yea-Lord,’ warns us in like manner against all such unmanly compliances. Let me note that we also once possessed ‘assentation’ in the sense of unworthy flattering lip-assent; the last example of it in our dictionaries is from Bishop Hall: ‘It is a fearful presage of ruin when the prophets conspire in *assentation* ;’ but it lived on to a far later day, being found and exactly in the same sense in Lord Chesterfield’s *Letters* to his Son; he there speaks of ‘abject flattery and indiscriminate assentation.’* The word is well worthy to be revived.

Again, how well it is to have that spirit of depreciation, that eagerness to find spots and stains in the characters of the noblest and the

* *August* 10, 1749.

best, who would otherwise oppress and rebuke us with a goodness and a greatness so immensely superior to ours,—met and checked by a word at once so expressive, and so little pleasant to take home to ourselves, as the French ‘*dénigreur*,’ a ‘blackener.’ This also has fallen out of use ; which is a pity, seeing that the race which it designates is so far from being extinct. Full too of instruction and warning is our present employment of ‘*libertine*.’ A ‘*libertine*,’ in earlier use, was a speculative free-thinker in matters of religion and in the theory of morals. But as by a sure process *free-thinking* does and will end in *free-acting*, he who has cast off one yoke also casting off the other, so a ‘*libertine*’ came in two or three generations to signify a profligate, especially in relation to women, a licentious and debauched person.

Look a little closely at the word ‘*passion*.’ We sometimes regard a ‘*passionate*’ man as a man of strong will, and of real, though ungoverned, energy. But ‘*passion*’ teaches us quite another lesson ; for it, as a very solemn use of it declares, means properly ‘*suffering* ;’ and a ‘*passionate*’ man is not one doing something, but one suffering something to be done to him. When then a man or child is ‘*in a passion*,’ this is no outcoming in him of a strong will, of a real energy, but the proof rather that, for the time at least, he is altogether wanting in these ; he is *suffering*, not doing ; suffering his anger, or what-

ever evil temper it may be, to lord over him without control. Let no one then think of 'passion' as a sign of strength. One might with as much justice conclude a man strong because he was often well beaten; this would prove that a strong man was putting forth his strength on him, but certainly not that he was himself strong. The same sense of 'passion' and feebleness going together, of the first as born of the second, lies, I may remark by the way, in the twofold use of 'impotens' in the Latin, which, meaning first weak, means then violent, and then weak and violent together. For a long time 'impotent' and 'impotence' in English embodied the same twofold meaning.

Or meditate on the use of 'humanitas,' and the use (in Scotland at least) of the 'humanities,' to designate those studies which are esteemed the fittest for training the true humanity in every man. We have happily overlived in England the time when it was still in debate among us whether education were a good thing for every living soul or not; the only question which now seriously divides Englishmen being, in what manner that mental and moral training, which is society's debt to each one of its members, may be most effectually imparted to him. Were it not so, did any affirm still that it was good for any man to be left with powers not called out and faculties untrained, we might appeal to this word 'humanitas,' and the use to which the

Roman put it, in proof that he at least was not of this mind, even as now we may not slight the striking witness to the truth herein contained. By 'humanitas' he intended the fullest and most harmonious culture of all the human faculties and powers. Then, and then only, man was truly man, when he received this; in so far as he did not receive this, his 'humanity' was maimed and imperfect; he fell short of his ideal, of that which he was created to be.

In our use of 'talents,' as when we say 'a man of talents' (not 'of talent,' for that, as we shall see presently, is nonsense, though 'of *a* talent' would be allowable), there is a clear recognition of the responsibilities which go along with the possession of intellectual gifts and endowments, whatsoever these may be. We owe our later use of 'talent' to the parable (Matt. xxv. 14), in which talents, more and fewer, are committed to the several servants, that they may trade with them in their master's absence, and give account of their employment at his return. Men may choose to forget the ends for which their 'talents' were given them; they may count them merely something which they have gotten;* they may turn them to selfish ends; they may glorify themselves in them, instead of glorifying the

* An *ἔξίς*, as the heathen did, not a *δῶρημα*, as the Christian does: see a remarkable passage in Bishop Andrew's *Sermons*, vol. iii. p. 384.

Giver; they may practically deny that they were given at all; yet in this world, till they can rid their vocabulary of it, abides a continual memento that they were so given, or rather lent, and that each man shall have to render an account of their use.

Again, in 'oblige' and 'obligation,' as when we speak of 'being obliged,' or of having 'received an obligation,' a moral truth is asserted—this namely, that having received a benefit or a favour at the hands of another, we are thereby morally *bound* to show ourselves grateful for the same. We cannot prove otherwise without denying not merely a moral truth, but one incorporated in the very language which we employ. Thus South, in a sermon, *Of the odious Sin of Ingratitude*, has well asked, 'If the conferring of a kindness did not *bind* the person upon whom it was conferred to the returns of gratitude, why, in the universal dialect of the world, are kindnesses called *obligations*?'*

Once more—the habit of calling a woman's chastity her 'virtue' is significant. I will not deny that it may spring in part from a tendency, which often meets us in language, to narrow the whole circle of virtues to some one upon which peculiar stress is laid;† but still, in select-

* *Sermons*, London, 1737, vol. i. p. 407.

† Thus in Jewish Greek, ἐλεημοσύνη stands often for δικαιοσύνη (Deut. vi. 25; Ps. 102, 6, LXX.), or almsgiving for righteousness.

ing this peculiar one as *the* 'virtue' of woman, there speaks out a true sense that this is indeed for her the citadel of the whole moral being, the overthrow of which is for her the overthrow of all ; that it is the keystone of the arch, which being withdrawn, the whole collapses and falls.

Or consider all which is witnessed for us in 'kind.' We speak of a 'kind' person, and we speak of man-'kind,' and perhaps, if we think about the matter at all, fancy that we are using quite different words, or the same word in senses quite unconnected. But they are connected, and by closest bonds ; a 'kind' person is a 'kinned' person, one of kin ; one who acknowledges his kinship with other men, and acts upon it ; confesses that he owes to them, as of one blood with himself, the debt of love. And so *mankind* is *mankinned*.* Beautiful before, how much more beautiful do 'kind' and 'kindness' appear, when we apprehend the root out of which they grow ; and the truth which they embody ; that they are the acknowledgment in loving deeds of our kinship with our brethren ; of the relationship which exists between all the members of the human family, and of the obligations growing out of this.

But I observed just now that there are also

* Thus Hamlet does much more than merely play on words when he calls his father's brother, who had married his mother, 'A little more than *kin*, and less than *kind*.'

words bearing on them the slime of the serpent's trail; uses, too, of words which imply moral perversity—not upon their parts who employ them now in their acquired senses, but on theirs from whom little by little they received their deflection, and were warped from their original rectitude. A 'prude' is now a woman with an over-scrupulous affectation of a modesty which she does not really feel, and betraying the absence of the substance by this over-preciseness and niceness about the shadow. Goodness must have gone strangely out of fashion, the corruption of manners must have been profound, before matters could have come to this point. 'Prude,' a French word, means properly virtuous or prudent; 'prud'homme' a man of courage and probity. But where morals are greatly and generally relaxed, virtue is treated as hypocrisy; and thus, in a dissolute age, and one incredulous of any inward purity, the 'prude' or virtuous was a sort of female Tartuffe, affecting a virtue which it was taken for granted none could really possess; and the word abides, a proof of the world's disbelief in the realities of goodness, of its resolution to treat them as hypocrisies and shows.

Again, why should 'simple' be used slightly, and 'simpleton' more slightly still? The 'simple, is one properly of a single fold ;*

* We must find in it, not 'sine plicâ,' but 'semel plico' (see Donaldson, *Varronianus*, p. 390).

a Nathanael, whom as such Christ honoured to the highest (John i. 47); and, indeed, what honour can be higher than to have nothing *double* about us, to be without *duplicities* or folds? Even the world, which despises 'simplicity,' does not profess to admire 'duplicity,' or double-foldedness. But inasmuch as it is felt that a man like this will in a world like ours make himself a prey, and as most men, if obliged to choose between deceiving and being deceived, would choose the former, it has come to pass that 'simple,' which in a kingdom of righteousness would be a word of highest honour, carries with it in this world of ours something of contempt.* Nor can we help noting another involuntary testimony borne by human language to human sin, I mean this,—that an idiot, or one otherwise deficient in intellect, is called an 'innocent,' or one who does no hurt; this use of 'innocent' assuming that to do hurt and harm is the chief employment to which men turn their intellectual powers, that where they are wise, they are oftenest wise to do evil.

Nor are these isolated examples of the con-

* 'Schlecht,' which in modern German means bad, good for nothing, once meant good, good, that is, in the sense of right or straight, but passed very much through the same stages to the meaning which it now possesses; 'albern' in like manner (Max Müller, *Science of Language*, 2nd series, p. 274).

temptuous employment of words expressive of goodness. Such meet us on every side. Our 'silly' is the Anglo-Saxon 'sælig,' or blessed. We see it in a transition state in our early poets, with whom 'silly' is an affectionate epithet which sheep obtain for their harmlessness. One among our earliest calls the newborn Lord of Glory Himself, 'this harmless *silly* babe.' But 'silly' has gone through the same process as 'simple,' 'innocent,' and so many other words in other tongues. The same moral phenomenon repeats itself continually. Thus, at the first promulgation of the Christian faith, while the name of its Divine Founder was still strange to the ears of the heathen, they were wont, some out of ignorance, but more of intention, slightly to mispronounce this name, turning 'Christus' into 'Chrestus'—that is, the benevolent or benign. That they who intentionally did this meant no honour thereby to the Lord of Life, but the contrary, is certain ; and indeed this word, like 'silly,' 'innocent,' 'simple,' had already contracted a slight tinge of contempt, or else there would have been no inducement to fasten it on the Saviour. What a strange perversion of the moral sense when a name implying benignity and goodness had about it an undertone of scorn ! The French have their 'bonhomie' with the same undertone of contempt, the Greeks also a well-known word. The same moral phenomenon reappears in other

quarters. Lady Shiel tells us of the Persians of this day, 'They have odd names for describing the moral qualities; "Sedākat" means sincerity, honesty, candour; but when a man is said to be possessed of "sedākat," the meaning is that he is a credulous, contemptible simpleton.'* It is to the honour of the Latin, and very characteristic of the best side of Roman life, that 'simplex' and 'simplicitas' never acquired this abusive signification.

Again, how prone are we all to ascribe to chance or fortune those gifts and blessings which indeed come directly from God—to build altars to Fortune rather than to Him who is the author of every good thing which we enjoy. And this faith of men, that their blessings, even their highest, come to them by a blind chance, they have incorporated in a word; for 'happy' and 'happiness' are connected with 'hap,' which is chance;—how unworthy, then, to express any true felicity, whose very essence is that it excludes hap or chance, that the world neither gave nor can take it away.† Against a similar misuse of 'fortunate,' 'unfortunate,' Wordsworth very nobly protests, when, of one who, having lost everything else, had yet kept the truth, he exclaims:

* *Life and Manners in Persia*, p. 247.

† The heathen with their *εὐδαιμονία*, inadequate as this word must be allowed to be, put us here to shame.

‘ Call not the royal Swede *unfortunate*,
Who never did to *Fortune* bend the knee.’

There are words which reveal a wrong or insufficient aspect which men take of their duties, or which at all events others have taken before them ; for it is possible that the mischief may have been done long ago, and those who now use the words may only have inherited it from others, not helped to bring it about themselves. An employer of labour advertises that he wants so many ‘hands;’ but this language never could have become current, a man could never have thus shrunk into a ‘hand’ in the eyes of his fellow-man, unless this latter had in good part forgotten that, annexed to those hands which he would purchase to toil for him, were also heads and hearts*—a fact, by the way, of which, if he persists in forgetting it, he may be reminded in very unwelcome ways at the last. In Scripture there is another not unfrequent putting of a part for the whole, as when it is said, ‘The same day there were added unto them about three thousand *souls*’ (Acts ii. 41). ‘Hands’ here, ‘souls’ there—the contrast may suggest some profitable reflections.

There is another way in which the immorality of words mainly displays itself, and in which

* The use of *σώματα* for slaves in Greek (thus see Rev. xviii. 13) rested originally on the same forgetfulness of the moral worth of every man.

they work their worst mischief ; that is, when honourable names are given to dishonourable things, when sin is made plausible ; arrayed, it may be, in the very colours of goodness, or, if not so, yet in such as go far to conceal its own native deformity. ‘The tongue,’ as St. James has said, ‘is *a world* of iniquity’ (iii. 6) ; or, as some would render his words, and they are then still more to our purpose, ‘*the ornament* of iniquity,’ that which sets it out in fair and attractive colours. I cannot think these last-named expositors are right, though it is possible to find such a meaning in his words ; at the same time the connexion of the Greek for ‘tongue’ with our ‘gloze,’ ‘glossy,’ with the German ‘gleissen,’ to smooth over or polish, and with an obsolete Greek word signifying the same, is not accidental, but real ; even as it points to uses whereunto we may turn this ‘*best*,’ but, as it would then prove, this *worst* ‘member that we have.’

How much wholesomer on all accounts is it that there should be an ugly word for an ugly thing, one involving moral condemnation and disgust, even at the expense of a little coarseness, rather than one which plays fast and loose with the eternal principles of morality, makes sin plausible, and shifts the divinely reared landmarks of right and wrong, thus bringing the user under the woe of them ‘that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for light, and

light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter' (Isai. v. 20). On this text, and with reference to this very matter, South has written four of his grandest sermons, bearing this striking title, *Of the fatal Imposture and Force of Words*.* How awful, yea how fearful, is this 'imposture and force' of theirs, leading men captive at will. There is an atmosphere about them which they are evermore diffusing, a savour of life or of death, which we insensibly inhale at each moral breath we draw.† 'Winds of the soul,' as we have already heard them called, they fill its sails, and are continually impelling it upon its course, to heaven or to hell.

Thus how different the light in which we shall have learned to regard a sin, according as we

* *Sermons*, 1737, vol. ii. pp. 313-351; vol. vi. pp. 3-120. Thus on those who pleaded that their 'honour' was engaged, and that therefore they could not go back from this or that sinful act:—'Honour is indeed a noble thing, and therefore the word which signifies it must needs be very plausible. But as a rich and glistening garment may be cast over a rotten body, so an illustrious commanding word may be put upon a vile and an ugly thing—for words are but the garments, the loose garments of things, and so may easily be put off and on according to the humour of him who bestows them. But the body changes not, though the garments do.'

† Bacon's words have been often quoted, but they will bear being quoted once more: *Credunt enim homines rationem suam verbis imperare. Sed fit etiam ut verba vim suam super intellectum retorqueant et reflectant.*

have been wont to designate it, and to hear it designated, by a word which brings out its loathsomeness and deformity ; or by one which palliates this and conceals ; men, as one said of old, being wont for the most part to be ashamed not of base deeds but of base names. Words of this kind are only too frequent ; as when in Italy, during the period when poisoning was rifest, nobody was said to be poisoned ; it was only that the death of some had been ‘assisted’ (*aiutata*). Worse still are words which seek to turn the point of the divine threatenings against some sin by a jest ; as when in France a subtle poison, by which impatient heirs delivered themselves from those who stood between them and the inheritance which they coveted, was called ‘*poudre de succession*.’ We might suppose beforehand that such clokes for sin would be only found among people in an advanced state of artificial cultivation. But it is not so. Captain Erskine, who visited the Fiji Islands when they were not so well known as now they are, and who gives some extraordinary details of the extent to which cannibalism then prevailed among their inhabitants, pork and human flesh being their two staple articles of food, relates in his deeply interesting record of his voyage that natural pig they called ‘*short pig*,’ and man dressed and prepared for food, ‘*long pig*.’ There was doubtless an attempt here to carry off with a jest the revolting character of the practice in

which they indulged. For that they were themselves aware of this, that their consciences did bear witness against it, was attested by their uniform desire to conceal, if possible, all traces of the practice from European eyes.

But worst, perhaps, of all are names which throw a flimsy veil of sentiment over some sin. What a source, for example, of mischief without end in our country parishes is the one practice of calling a child born out of wedlock a 'love-child,' instead of a bastard. It would be hard to estimate how much it has lowered the tone and standard of morality among us ; or for how many young women it may have helped to make the downward way more sloping still. How vigorously ought we to oppose ourselves to all such immoralities of language. This opposition, it is true, will never be easy or pleasant ; for many who will endure to commit a sin, will profoundly resent having that sin called by its right name. The thieves in Shakespeare are only true to human nature, when they call themselves 'St. Nicholas' clerks,' 'michers,' 'nuthooks,' anything in short but thieves ; when they claim for their stealing that it shall not be so called, but only conveying ('convey the wise it call') ; the same dislike to look an ugly fact in the face reappearing among the voters in some of our corrupter boroughs, who receive, not bribes—they are most indignant if this is imputed to them—but 'head-money' for their votes. Shake-

speare indeed has said that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet ; but there are some things which are not roses, and which are thought to smell a great deal sweeter by any other name than by their own.

Coarse as, according to our present usages of language, may be esteemed the words by which our plain-speaking Anglo-Saxon fathers were wont to designate the unhappy women who make a trade of selling their bodies to the lusts of men, yet how much better the truth which is in them than the falsehood of many other titles by which they have been known—names which may themselves be called ‘whited sepulchres,’ fair without, yet hiding so much foul within ; as, for instance, that in the French language which ascribes *joy* to a life which more surely than any other dries up all the sources of gladness in the heart, brings anguish, astonishment, blackest melancholy on all who have addicted themselves to it. In the same way how much more moral words are the English ‘sharper’ and ‘blackleg’ than the French ‘chevalier d’industrie :’* and the same holds good of the English equivalent, coarse as it is, for the Latin ‘conciliatrix.’ In this last word we have a notable example of the putting of sweet for bitter, of the attempt to present a disgraceful occupation on an amiable,

* For the rise of this phrase, see Lemontey, *Louis XIV.* p. 43.

almost a sentimental side, rather than in its own proper deformity and ugliness.*

Use and custom soon dim our eyes in such matters as these ; else we should be deeply struck by a familiar instance of this falsehood in names, one which perhaps has never struck us at all—I mean the profane appropriation of ‘eau de vie’ (water of life), a name borrowed from some of the Saviour’s most precious promises (John iv. 14 ; Rev. xxii. 17), to a drink which the untutored savage with a truer instinct has named ‘fire-water ;’ which, sad to say, is known in Tahiti as ‘British water ;’ and which has proved for thousands and tens of thousands, in every clime, not ‘water of life,’ but the fruitful source of disease, crime, and madness, bring-

* This tendency of men to throw the mantle of an honourable word over a dishonourable thing, or, vice versâ, to degrade an honourable thing, when they do not love it, by a dishonourable appellation, has in Greek a word to describe it, *ὑποκορίζεσθαι*, itself a word with an interesting history ; while the great ethical teachers of Greece frequently occupy themselves in detecting and denouncing this most mischievous among all the impostures of words. Thus, when Thucydides (iii. 82) would paint the fearful moral ruin which her great Civil War had wrought, he adduces this alteration of the received value of words, this fitting of false names to everything—names of honour to the base, and of baseness to the honourable—as one of the most remarkable tokens of this, even as it again set forward the evil, of which it had been first the result.

ing forth first these, and when these are finished, bringing forth death. There is a blasphemous irony in this appropriation of the language of heaven to that which, not indeed in its use, but too frequent abuse, is the instrument of hell, that is almost without a parallel.*

If I wanted any further evidence of this, the moral atmosphere which words diffuse, I would ask you to observe how the first thing men do, when engaged in controversy with others, be it in the conflict of the tongue or the pen, or of weapons more wounding yet, if such there be, is ever to assume some honourable name to themselves, such as, if possible, shall beg the whole

* Milton in a profoundly interesting letter, addressed by him to one of the friends whom he made during his Italian tour, encourages him in those philological studies to which he had devoted his life by such words as these: *Neque enim qui sermo, purusne an corruptus, quæve loquendi proprietas quotidiana populo sit, parvi interesse arbitrandum est, quæ res Athenis non semel saluti fuit; immo vero, quod Platonis sententia est, immutato vestimenti more habituque graves in Republicâ motus mutationesque portendi, equidem potius collabente in vitium atque errorem loquendi usu occasum ejus urbis remque humilem et obscuram subsequi crediderim: verba enim partim inscita et putida, partim mendosa et perperam prolata, quid si ignavos et oscitantes et ad servile quidvis jam olim paratos incolarum animos haud levi indicio declarant? Contra nullum unquam audivimus imperium, nullam civitatem non mediocriter saltem floruisse, quamdiu linguæ sua gratia, suusque cultus constitit. Compare an interesting Epistle (the 114th) of Seneca.*

matter in dispute, and at the same time to affix on their adversaries a name which shall place them in a ridiculous or contemptible, an invidious, or odious light.* There is a deep instinct in men, deeper perhaps than they give any account of to themselves, which tells them how far this will go; that multitudes, utterly unable to weigh the arguments of the case, will yet be receptive of the influences which these words are evermore, however imperceptibly, diffusing. By arguments they might hope to gain over the reason of a few, but by help of these nicknames they enlist what at first are so much more potent, the prejudices and passions of the many, on their side. Thus when at the breaking out of our Civil War the Parliamentary party styled *themselves* 'The Godly,' while to the Royalists they gave the title of the 'Malignants,' it is certain that, wherever they could procure entrance and allowance for these terms, the question upon whose side the right lay was already decided. The Royalists, it is true, made exactly the same employment of question-begging words, of words steeped quite as deeply in the passions which animated *them*. So, too, the Franciscans, when they nicknamed the Dominicans 'Maculists,' as denying, or at all events refusing to affirm, that the Blessed Virgin was conceived without stain (*sine maculâ*), perfectly knew that this title

* See p. 32.

would do much to put their rivals in an odious light. The copperhead in America is a peculiarly venomous snake. Something effectual has been done when this name has been fastened, as it has lately been, by one party in America on its political opponents.

Seeing, then, that language contains so faithful a record of the good and of the evil which in time past have been working in the minds and hearts of men, we shall not err, if we regard it as a moral barometer indicating and permanently marking the rise or fall of a nation's life. To study a people's language will be to study *them*, and to study them at best advantage ; there, where they present themselves to us under fewest disguises, most nearly as they are. Too many have had a hand in language, and in bringing it to its final shape, it is too entirely the collective work of the whole nation, the result of the united contributions of all, it obeys too immutable laws, to allow any successful tampering with it, any making of it to witness other than the actual facts of the case.*

* Terrien Poncel (*Du Langage*, p. 231): Les langues sont faites à l'usage des peuples qui les parlent ; elles sont animées chacune d'un esprit différent, et suivent un mode particulier d'action, conforme à leur principe. 'L'esprit d'une nation et le caractère de sa langue,' a écrit G. de Humboldt, 'sont si intimement liés ensemble, qu'il si l'un était donné, l'autre devrait pouvoir s'en déduire exactement.' La langue n'est autre chose que la mani-

Thus the frivolity of an age or nation, its mockery of itself, its inability to comprehend the true dignity and meaning of life, the feebleness of its moral indignation against evil, all this will find an utterance in the employment of solemn and earnest words in senses comparatively trivial or even ridiculous. 'Gehenna,' that word of such terrible significance on the lips of our Lord, has in French issued in 'gêne,' and in this shape expresses no more than a slight and petty annoyance. 'Ennui' meant once something very different from what now it means. Littré gives as its original signification, 'Anguish of soul, caused by the death of persons beloved, by their absence, by the shipwreck of hopes, by any misfortunes whatever.' 'Honnêteté,' which should mean that virtue of all virtues, honesty, and which did mean it once, standing as it does now for external civility and for nothing more, marks a willingness to accept the slighter observances and pleasant courtesies of society in the room of deeper moral qualities. 'Vérité' is at this day so worn out, has been used so often where another and very different word would have been far more appropriate, that a Frenchman at this present who would fain convince us of the

festation extérieure de l'esprit des peuples ; leur langue est leur esprit, et leur esprit est leur langue, de telle sorte qu'en développant et perfectionnant l'un, ils développent et perfectionnent nécessairement l'autre.

truth of his communication counts that he can only do so by assuring us that it is 'la vraie vérité.' Neither is it well that words, which ought to have been reserved for the highest mysteries of the spiritual life, should be squandered on slight and secular objects,—'spirituel' itself is an example in point,—or that words implying once the deepest moral guilt, as is the case with 'perfide,' 'malice,' 'malin,' in French, should be employed now almost in honour, or at all events in jest and in play.

Often a people's use of some single word will afford us a deeper insight into their real condition, their habits of thought and feeling, than whole volumes written expressly with the intention of imparting this insight. Thus 'idiot,' a Greek word, is abundantly characteristic of Greek life. The 'idiot' or *ἰδιώτης*, was originally the *private* man, as contradistinguished from one clothed with office, and taking his share in the management of public affairs. In this its primary sense it was often used in the English of the seventeenth century; as when Jeremy Taylor says, 'Humility is a duty in great ones, as well as in *idiots*.' It came then to signify a rude, ignorant, unskilled, intellectually unexercised person, a boor; this derived or secondary sense bearing witness to a conviction woven deep into the Greek mind that contact with public life was indispensable even to the right development of the

intellect,* a conviction which could scarcely have uttered itself with greater clearness than it does in this secondary use of 'idiot.' Our tertiary, in which the 'idiot' is one deficient in intellect, not merely with its powers unexercised, is but this secondary pushed a little farther. Once more, how wonderfully instructive it is that the Greek should have had one and the same word (*καλός*), to express the beautiful and the good—goodness being thus contemplated as the highest beauty ; while over against this stands another word (*αἰσχροός*), used now for the ugly, and now for the morally bad. Again, the innermost differences between the Greek mind and the Hebrew reveal themselves in the several salutations of each, in the 'Rejoice' of the first, as contrasted with the 'Peace' of the second. The clear, cheerful, world-enjoying temper of the Greek embodies itself in the first ; he could desire nothing better or higher for himself, nor wish it for his friend, than to have *joy* in his life. But the Hebrew had a deeper longing within him, and one which finds utterance in his 'Peace.' It is not hard to perceive why this latter people should have been chosen as the first bearers of that truth which indeed enables truly to *rejoice*, but only through first bringing *peace* ; nor why from them the word of life should first go forth. It may be urged, indeed, that these were only forms, and

* Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, p. 552.

such they may have at length become ; as in our 'good-by' or 'adieu' we can hardly be said now to commit our friend to the Divine protection ; yet still they were not such at the first, nor would they have held their ground, if ever they had become such altogether.

The modifications of meaning which a word has undergone, as it had been transplanted from one soil to another, so that one nation borrowing it from another, has brought into it some force foreign to it before, has deepened, or extenuated, or otherwise altered its meaning,—this may reveal to us, as perhaps nothing else would, fundamental diversities of character existing between them. The word in Greek exactly corresponding to our 'self-sufficient' is one of honour, and was applied to men in their praise. And indeed it was the glory of the heathen philosophy to teach man to find his resources in his own bosom, to be thus sufficient for himself ; and seeing that a true centre without him and above him, a centre in God, had not been revealed to him, it was no shame for him to seek it there ; far better this than to have no centre at all. But the Gospel has taught us another lesson, to find our sufficiency in God : and thus 'self-sufficient,' to the Greek suggesting no lack of modesty, of humility, or of any good thing, at once suggests such to us. 'Self-sufficiency' no man desires now to be attributed to him. The word carries for us its own condemnation ; and

its different uses, for honour once, for reproach now, do in fact ground themselves on the innermost differences between the religious condition of the world before Christ and after.

It was not well with Italy, she might fill the world with exquisite specimens of her skill in the arts, with pictures and statues of rarest loveliness, but all higher national life was wanting to her, during those centuries in which she degraded 'virtuoso,' or the virtuous man, to signify one skilled in the appreciation of painting, music, and sculpture; for these, the ornamental fringe of a nation's life, can never, without loss of all manliness of character, be its main texture and woof—not to say that excellence in them has been too often dissociated from all true virtue and moral worth. The opposite exaggeration of the Romans, for whom 'virtus' meant warlike courage, and the only 'manliness' which they knew, was more tolerable than this; for there is a sense in which a man's 'valour' is his value, is the measure of his worth; seeing that no virtue can exist unless men have learned, in Milton's glorious phrase, 'to hate the cowardice of doing wrong.'* It could not but be morally ill with a people among whom 'morbidezza' was used as a word of praise, expressive of a beauty

* It did not escape Plutarch, poor Latin scholar as he was, that 'virtus' had far more the sense of ἀνδρεία than of ἀρετή (*Coriol.* I).

which claimed for this its 'sickly softness' to be admired. There was too sure a witness here for the decay of moral strength and health, when these could not merely be disconnected from beauty, but implicitly put in opposition to it. Nor less must it have fared ill with them, there was little joy and little pride which they could have felt in their country at a time when 'pellegrino,' meaning properly the strange or the foreign, came to be of itself a word of praise, and equivalent to beautiful. Far better the pride and assumption of that ancient people who called all things and persons beyond their own pale, barbarous and barbarians; far better our own 'outlandish,' used with something of the same contempt. There may be a certain intolerance in these; yet this how much healthier than so far to have fallen out of conceit with one's own country, so far to affect things foreign, that these last, merely on the strength of being foreign, commend themselves as beautiful in our sight. How little, again, the Italians, until quite later years, can have lived in the spirit of their ancient worthies, or revered the most illustrious among these, we may argue from the fact that they should have been content so far to degrade the name of one among their noblest, that every glib and loquacious hireling who shows strangers about their picture-galleries, palaces, and ruins, is called 'cicerone,' or a Cicero! It is unfortunate that terms like these, having once grown

up, are not again, or are not easily again, got rid of. They remain, testifying to an ignoble past, and in some sort helping to maintain it, long after the temper that produced them has passed away.*

Happily it is nearly impossible for us in England to understand the mingled scorn, hatred, fear, suspicion, contempt, which in time past were associated with the word 'sbirri' in Italian. These 'sbirri' were the humble, but with all this the acknowledged, ministers of justice; while yet everything which is mean and false and oppressive, which can make the name of justice hateful, was implied in this title of theirs, is associated with their name. There is no surer sign of a bad oppressive rule, than when the titles of the administrators of law, titles which should be in themselves so honourable, thus acquire a hateful undertone. What a world of oppression, chicane, and fraud must have found place, before tax-gatherer, or exciseman, could be a word steeped in uttermost scorn, as alike for Greek and Jew it was; while, on the other hand, however unwelcome the visits of the one or the interference of the other may be to us, yet the sense of the entire fairness and justice with which their exactions are made, acquits these names for us of the slightest sense of dishonour. 'Policeman'

* See on this matter Marsh, *On the English Language*, New York, 1860, p. 224.

has no evil subaudition with us ; though in the last century, when our police was otherwise administered than now, 'catchpole,' in Wiclif's time quite an honourable word, had acquired such. So too, if at this day any accidental profits fall or 'escheat' to the Crown, they are levied with so much fairness and more than fairness to the subject, that, were not the thing already done, 'escheat' would never yield 'cheat,' nor 'escheator' 'cheater,' as, through the extortions and injustices for which these dues were formerly a pretext, they actually have done.

It is worse, as marking that a still holier sanctuary than that of civil government has become profane in men's sight, when words which express sacred functions and offices become redolent of scorn. How thankful we may be that in England we have no equivalent to the German 'Pfaffe,' which, identical with 'papa' and 'pope,' and meaning at first but a priest, now carries with it the insinuation of almost every unworthiness in the forms of meanness, servility, and avarice which can render the priest's office and person base and contemptible.

How much may be learned by noting the words which nations have been obliged to borrow from other nations, as not having them of home-growth—this in most cases, if not in all, testifying that the thing itself was not native, was only an exotic, transplanted, like the word which indicated it, from a foreign soil. Thus it

is singularly characteristic of the social and political life of England, as distinguished from that of the other European nations, that to it alone the word 'club' belongs; France and Germany, having been alike unable to grow a word of their own, have borrowed ours. That England should have been the birthplace of 'club' is nothing wonderful; for these voluntary associations of men for the furthering of such social or political ends as are near to the hearts of the associates could have only had their rise under such favourable circumstances as ours. In no country where there was not extreme personal freedom could they have sprung up; and as little in any where men did not know how to use this freedom with moderation and self-restraint, could they long have been endured. It was comparatively easy to adopt the word; but the ill success of the 'club' itself everywhere save here where it is native, has shown that it was not so easy to transplant the thing. While we have lent this and other words, political and industrial for the most part, to the French and Germans, it would not be less instructive, if time allowed, to trace our corresponding obligations to them.

And scarcely less significant and instructive than the presence of a word in a language, will be occasionally its absence. How curious, for instance, are the conclusions which Cicero in his high Roman fashion draws from the absence of any word in the Greek corresponding to the

Latin 'ineptus;' not from this concluding, as we might have anticipated, that the character designated by the word was wanting, but rather that the fault was so common, so universal with the Greeks, that they failed to recognize it as a fault at all.*

But it is time to bring this lecture to an end. These illustrations, to which it would be easy to add more, justify all that has been asserted of a moral element existing in words; so that they do not hold themselves neutral in that great conflict between good and evil, light and darkness, which is dividing the world; that they are not satisfied to be the passive vehicles, now of the truth, and now of falsehood. We see, on the contrary, that they continually take their side, are some of them children of light, others children of this world, or even of darkness; they beat with the pulses of our life; they stir with our passions; we clothe them with light; we

* *De Orat.* ii. 4, 7: Quem enim nos *ineptum* vocamus, is mihi videtur ab hoc nomen habere ductum, quod non sit aptus. Idque in sermonis nostri consuetudine perlate patet. Nam qui aut tempus quid postulet, non videt, aut plura loquitur, aut se ostentat, aut eorum quibuscum est, vel dignitatis vel commodi rationem non habet, aut denique in aliquo genere aut inconcinnus aut multus est, is ineptus esse dicitur. Hoc vitio cumulata est erudissima illa Græcorum natio. Itaque quod vim hujus mali Græci non vident, ne nomen quidem ei vitio imposuerunt. Ut enim quæras omnia, quomodo Græci *ineptum* appellent, non invenies.

steep them in scorn ; they receive from us the impressions of our good and of our evil, which again they are most active further to propagate and diffuse. Must we not own then that there is a wondrous and mysterious world, of which we may hitherto have taken too little account, around us and about us? Is there not something very solemn and very awful in wielding such an instrument as this of language is, so mighty to wound or to heal, to kill or to make alive? and may not a deeper meaning than hitherto we have attached to it, lie in that saying, 'By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned'?

LECTURE IV.

ON THE HISTORY IN WORDS.

LANGUAGE, which is ever in flux and flow, which among nations that have not invented or adopted letters, exists only as a sound, we might beforehand have assumed would prove the frailest, the most untrustworthy, of all vehicles of the knowledge of the past ; that one which would most certainly betray its charge. So far, however, from this being the fact, it is the main, oftentimes the only, connecting link between that past and our present ; it is oftentimes an ark riding above the waterfloods that have swept away or submerged every other landmark and memorial of bygone ages and vanished generations of men. Far beyond all written records in a language, the language itself stretches back, and offers itself for our investigation—‘the pedigree of nations,’ as Johnson calls it—itself a far older and at the same time a far more instructive monument and document than any writing which employs it. The written records may have been falsified by carelessness, by vanity, by fraud, by a multitude of causes ;

but language is never false, never deceives us, if only we know how to question it aright.

What a voice and testimony it has on a question perhaps the most deeply interesting of all. Some, as you are aware, on one ground or another deny the accuracy of the Scripture statement that the whole earth was peopled from a single pair; urge, on the contrary, that there must have been many beginnings, many original centres of human population. Dr. Pritchard and others have shown that Science, quite independent of Revelation, though unable to prove, yet decisively points to, a *physical* unity of the human race. But this is not all. There is much to lead us to anticipate that a stronger evidence and a *moral* argument for the unity of mankind more convincing yet, will some day be forthcoming. We have seen in our own time the consanguinity plainly traced and by all admitted, of families of languages which a very few years ago were esteemed to have absolutely no connection with one another; and while very much remains still to be done, yet assuredly the tendency of all later investigations into languages and their relations, is more and more to refer them to a common stock and single fountain-head.

Such investigations as these, however, lie plainly out of your sphere. Not so, however, those humbler yet not less interesting inquiries, which by the aid of any tolerable dictionary

you may carry on into the past history of your own land, as attested by the present language of its people. You know how the geologist is able from the different strata and deposits, primary, secondary, or tertiary, succeeding one another, which he meets, to arrive at a knowledge of the successive physical changes through which a region has passed; is in a condition to preside at those changes, to measure the forces which were at work to produce them, and almost to indicate their date. Now with such a language as the English before us, bearing as it does the marks and footprints of great revolutions profoundly impressed upon it, we may carry on moral and historical researches precisely analogous to his. Here too are strata and deposits, not of gravel and chalk, sandstone and limestone, but of Celtic, Latin, German, Danish, Norman words, and then once more Latin and French, with slighter intrusions from other quarters: and any one with skill to analyse the language might re-create for himself the history of the people speaking that language, might with tolerable accuracy appreciate the divers elements out of which that people was composed, in what proportion these were mingled, and in what succession they followed one upon the other.

He would trace, for example, the relation in which the English and Norman occupants of this land stood to one another. An account of

this, in the main as accurate as it would be certainly instructive, might be drawn from an intelligent study of the contributions which they have severally made to the English language, as bequeathed to us jointly by them both. Supposing all other records to have perished, we might still work out and almost reconstruct the history by these aids ; even as now, when so many documents, so many institutions survive, this must still be accounted the most important, and that of which the study will introduce us, as no other can, into the innermost heart and life of large periods of our history.

Nor, indeed, is it hard to see why the language must contain such instruction as this, when we a little realize to ourselves the stages by which it has come down to us in its present shape. There was a time when the languages which the English and the Norman severally spoke, existed each by the side of, but unmingled with, the other ; one, that of the small dominant class, the other that of the great body of the people. By degrees, however, with the reconciliation and partial fusion of the two races, the two languages effected a transaction ; one indeed prevailed over the other, but at the same time received a multitude of the words of that other into its own bosom. At once there would exist duplicates for many things. But as in popular speech two words will not long exist side by side to designate the same thing, it be-

came a question how the relative claims of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman word should adjust themselves, which should remain, which should be dropped ; or, if not dropped, should be transferred to some other object, or express some other relation. It is not of course meant that this was ever formally proposed, or as something to be settled by agreement ; but practically one was to be taken and one left. Which was it that should maintain its ground ? Evidently, where a word was often on the lips of one race, its equivalent seldom on those of the other, where it intimately cohered with the manner of life of one, was only remotely in contact with that of the other, where it laid strong hold on one, and only slight on the other, the issue could not be doubtful. In several cases the matter was simpler still : it was not that one word expelled the other, or that rival claims had to be adjusted ; but that there never had existed more than one word, the thing which that word noted having been quite strange to the other section of the nation.

Here is the explanation of the assertion made just now—namely, that we might almost reconstruct our history, so far as it turns upon the Norman Conquest, by an analysis of our present language, a mustering of its words in groups, and a close observation of the nature and character of those which the two races have severally contributed to it. Thus we should confidently

conclude that the Norman was the ruling race, from the noticeable fact that all the words of dignity, state, honour, and pre-eminence, with one remarkable exception (to be adduced presently), descend to us from them—‘sovereign,’ ‘sceptre,’ ‘throne,’ ‘realm,’ ‘royalty,’ ‘homage,’ ‘prince,’ ‘duke,’ ‘count,’ (‘earl’ indeed is Scandinavian, though he must borrow his ‘countess’ from the Norman), ‘chancellor,’ ‘treasurer,’ ‘palace,’ ‘castle,’ ‘hall,’ ‘dome,’ and a multitude more. At the same time the one remarkable exception of ‘king’ would make us, even did we know nothing of the actual facts, suspect that the chieftain of this ruling race came in not upon a new title, not as overthrowing a former dynasty, but claiming to be in the rightful line of its succession; that the true continuity of the nation had not, in fact any more than in word, been entirely broken, but survived, in due time to assert itself anew.

And yet, while the statelier superstructure of the language, almost all articles of luxury, all having to do with the chase, with chivalry, with personal adornment, are Norman throughout; with the broad basis of the language, and therefore of the life, it is otherwise. The great features of nature, sun, moon, and stars, earth, water, and fire; three out of the four seasons, spring, summer, and winter; all the prime social relations, father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, sister,—these are Saxon. ‘Palace’ and

‘castle’ may have reached us from the Norman, but to the Saxon we owe far dearer names, the ‘house,’ the ‘roof,’ the ‘home,’ the ‘hearth.’ His ‘board’ too, and often probably it was no more, has a more hospitable sound than the ‘table’ of his lord. His sturdy arms turn the soil; he is the ‘boor,’ the ‘hind,’ the ‘churl;’ or if his Norman master has a name for him, it is one which on his lips becomes more and more a title of opprobrium and contempt, the ‘villain.’ The instruments used in cultivating the earth, the ‘flail,’ the ‘plough,’ the ‘sickle,’ the ‘spade,’ are expressed in his language; so too the main products of the earth, as wheat, rye, oats, bere; and no less the names of domestic animals. Concerning these last it is curious to observe, (and it may be remembered that Wamba, the Saxon jester in *Ivanhoe*, plays the philologer here,)* that the names of almost all animals, so long as they are alive, are thus Saxon, but when dressed and prepared for food become Norman—a fact, indeed, which we might have expected beforehand; for the Saxon hind had the charge and labour of tending and feeding them, but only that they might appear on the table of his Norman lord. Thus ‘ox,’ ‘steer,’ ‘cow,’ are Saxon, but ‘beef’ Norman; ‘calf’ is Saxon, but ‘veal’ Norman; ‘sheep’ is Saxon, but ‘mutton’ Norman; so it is severally with ‘swine’ and

* Wallis, in his *Grammar*, p. 20, had done so before.

‘pork,’ ‘deer’ and ‘venison,’ ‘fowl’ and ‘pullet.’ ‘Bacon,’ the only flesh which perhaps ever came within his reach, is the single exception. Putting all this together, with much more of the same kind, which has only been indicated here, we should certainly gather, that while there are manifest tokens preserved in our language, of the Saxon having been for a season an inferior and even an oppressed race, the stable elements of Anglo-Saxon life, however overlaid for a while, had still made good their claim to be the solid groundwork of the after nation as of the after language; and to the justice of this conclusion all other historic records, and the present social condition of England, consent in bearing witness.*

Then again, who could doubt, even if the fact were not historically attested, that the Arabs were the arithmeticians, the astronomers, the chemists, the merchants of the Middle Ages, when he had once noted that from them we have gotten these, and so many other words like them—‘cypher,’ ‘algebra,’ ‘zero,’ ‘almanack,’ ‘zenith,’ ‘nadir,’ ‘azimuth,’ ‘alkali,’ ‘alcohol,’ ‘alchemy,’ ‘alembic,’ ‘elixir,’ ‘magazine,’ ‘tariff’?—for if one or two of these were originally Greek, they reached us through the Arabic, and with the tokens of their transit cleaving to them. In like manner, even though history were silent on the

* Compare Donaldson, *New Cratylus*, 3rd edition, p. 17.

matter, we might conclude, and we know that we should rightly conclude, that the origins of the monastic system are to be sought in the Greek and not in the Latin branch of the Church, seeing that with hardly an exception the words expressing the constituent elements of the system, as 'monk,' 'monastery,' 'cenobite,' 'anchorite,' 'ascetic,' 'hermit,' 'archimandrite,' are Greek and not Latin.

But the study of words will throw rays of light upon a past infinitely more remote than any which I have suggested here, will reveal to us secrets of the past, which else must have been lost to us for ever. Thus it must be a question of profound interest for as many as count the study of man to be far above every other study, to ascertain what point of culture that Indo-European race of which we come, the *stirps generosa et historica* of the world, as Coleridge has called it well, had attained, while it was dwelling still as one family in that which was its common home in the East. No voices of history, the very faintest voices of tradition, reach us from ages so far removed from our own. But in the silence of all other voices there is one voice which makes itself heard, and which can tell us much. Where Indian, and Greek, and Latin, and Gothic designate some object by the same word, and where it can be clearly shown that they did not, at a later day, borrow that word one from the other, the object, we may con-

fidently conclude, must have been familiar to the Indo-European race, while yet these several groups of it dwelt in the Asiatic highlands as one undivided family together. Now they have such common words for the chief domestic animals—for ox, for sheep, for horse, for dog, for goose, and for many more. From this we have a right to gather that before the migrations began, they had overlived and outgrown the fishing and hunting stages of civilization, and entered on the pastoral. They have *not* all the same words for the main products of the earth, as for corn, wheat, barley, wine; it is tolerably evident therefore that they had not entered on the agricultural stage of existence. So too from the absence of names in common for the principal metals, we have a right to argue that they had not arrived at a knowledge of the working of these. On the other hand, identical names for dress, for house, for door, for garden, for numbers as far as a hundred, for the primary relations of the family, as father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, for the Godhead, testify that the common stock, intellectual and moral, was not small with which they severally went their way, each to set up for itself and work out its own destinies in its own appointed region of the earth.* This common stock may indeed have been much larger than

* See Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte*, vol. i. c. 2; Max Müller, *On the Science of Language*, part ii. p. 223.

these investigations declare ; for a word, once common to all these languages, may have survived only in one ; or possibly may have perished in them all. Larger it may very well, but poorer it cannot, have been.

This is one way in which words by their presence or their absence may teach us history which else we could never know. I pass to other ways.

There are vast harvests of historic lore garnered often in single words ; important facts which they at once proclaim and preserve ; these too such as sometimes have survived nowhere else but in them. How much history lies in the word 'church.' I see no sufficient reason to dissent from those who derive it from the Greek *κυριακή*, 'that which pertains to the Lord,' or 'the house which is the Lord's.' A difficulty indeed meets us here. How explain the presence of a Greek word in the vocabulary of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers ? for that *we* derive it mediately from them, and not immediately from the Greek, is certain. What contact, direct or indirect, between the languages will account for this ? The explanation is curious. While the Anglo-Saxons and other tribes of the Teutonic stock were almost universally converted through contact with the Latin Church in the western provinces of the Roman Empire, or by its missionaries, some Goths on the Lower Danube had been brought at an earlier date to the knowledge of Christ by Greek missionaries from Constan-

tinople; and this κυριακή, or 'church,' did, with certain other words, pass over from the Greek to the Gothic tongue; and these Goths, the first converted and the first therefore with a Christian vocabulary, lent the word in their turn to the other German tribes, among these to our Anglo-Saxon forefathers; and by this circuit it has come round from Constantinople to us.*

Or again, interrogate 'pagan' and 'paganism,' and you will find important history in them. You are aware that 'pagani,' derived from 'pagus,' a village, had at first no religious significance, but designated the dwellers in hamlets and villages, as distinguished from the inhabitants of towns and cities. It was, indeed, often applied to *all* civilians, as contradistinguished from the military caste; and this fact may have had a certain influence, when the idea of the faithful as soldiers of Christ was strongly realized in the minds of men. But it was mainly in this way that it

* The passage most illustrative of the parentage of the word is from Walafrid Strabo (about A.D. 840). Ab ipsis autem Græcis Kyrch à Kyrios, et alia multa accepimus. Sicut domus Dei Basilica, i.e. Regia à Rege, sic etiam Kyrica, i.e. Dominica, à Domino, nuncupatur. Si autem quæritur, quâ occasione ad nos vestigia hæc græcitatæ advenerint, dicendum præcipuè à Gothis, qui et Getæ, cùm eo tempore, quo ad fidem Christi perducti sunt, in Græcorum provinciis commorantes, nostrum, i.e. theoticum sermonem habuerint. Cf. Rudolf von Raumer, *Einwirkung des Christenthums auf die Althochdeutsche Sprache*, p. 288.

became a name for those alien from the faith of Christ. The Church fixed itself first in the seats and centres of intelligence, in the towns and cities of the Roman Empire; in them its earliest triumphs were won; while, long after these had accepted the truth, heathen superstitions and idolatries lingered on in the obscure hamlets and villages; so that 'pagans,' or villagers, came to be applied to *all* the remaining votaries of the old and decayed superstitions, although not all, but only most of them, were such. In an edict of the Emperor Valentinian, of date A.D. 368, 'pagan' first assumes this secondary meaning. We explain 'heathen' in exactly the same way. When the Christian faith was first introduced into Germany, it was the wild dwellers on the *heaths* who longest resisted the truth. One hardly expects an etymology in *Piers Ploughman*; but this is there (10541, 2):

'Hethen is to mene after heeth,
And untiled erthe.'

Here, then, are two instructive notices—one, the historic fact that the Church of Christ planted itself first in the haunts of learning and intelligence; another, morally more important, that it did not shun discussion, feared not to encounter the wit and wisdom of this world, or to expose its claims to the searching examination of educated men; but, on the contrary, had its claims first recognized by them, and in the great

cities of the world won first a complete triumph over all opposing powers.*

I quoted in my first lecture the words of one who, magnifying the advantage to be derived from such studies as ours, observed that oftentimes more might be learned from the history of a word than from the history of a campaign. Words out of number, such as 'sophist,' 'barbarous,' 'clerk,' 'romance,' 'benefice,' 'sacrament,' suggest themselves to me, any one of which would prove the truth of the assertion. Let us take 'sacrament;' its history, while it carries us far, will yet carry us by ways full of instruction; and this, while we confine ourselves strictly to this history, not needlessly meddling with discussions about the thing, its place and importance in the Christian scheme. We shall find ourselves first among the forms of Roman law. The 'sacramentum' appears there as the deposit or pledge, which in certain suits plaintiff and defendant were alike bound to make, and whereby they engaged themselves to one another; the loser of the suit forfeiting his pledge to sacred temple uses, from which fact the name 'sacramentum,' or thing consecrated, was first derived. The word, as next employed, plants

* There is a good note on 'pagan' in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, c. 21, at the end; and in Grimm's *Deutsche Mythol.* p. 1198; and the history of the changes in the word's use is well traced in another interest by Mill, *Logic*, vol. ii. p. 271.

us amidst the military affairs of Rome, designating the military oath by which the Roman soldiers mutually engaged themselves at the first enlisting never to desert their standards, or turn their backs upon the enemy, or abandon their *Imperator*—this employment teaching us the sacredness which the Romans attached to their military engagements, and going far to account for their victories. The word was then transferred from this military oath to any solemn oath whatsoever. These three stages ‘sacramentum’ had already passed through, before the Church claimed it for her own, or indeed herself existed at all. Her early writers, out of a sense of the sacredness and solemnity of the oath, transferred this name to almost any act of special solemnity or sanctity, above all to such mysteries as intended more than met eye or ear. For them the Incarnation was a ‘sacrament,’ the lifting up of the brazen serpent was a ‘sacrament,’ the giving of the manna, and many things more. It is well to be acquainted with this phase of the word’s history, depriving as it does of all convincing power those passages quoted by Roman Catholic controversialists from early church-writers in proof of their seven sacraments. It is quite true that these may have called marriage a ‘sacrament,’ and Confirmation a ‘sacrament,’ and we may reach the Roman seven without difficulty; but then they called many things more, which even the theologians

of Rome do not include in the 'sacraments' properly so called, by the same name; and this evidence, proving too much, in fact proves nothing at all. One other stage in the word's history remains; its limitation, namely, to the two 'sacraments,' properly so called, of the Christian Church. A reminiscence of the employment of 'sacrament,' an employment which still survived, to signify the plighted troth of the Roman soldier to his captain and commander, was that which had most to do with the transfer of the word to Baptism; wherein we, with more than one allusion to this oath of theirs, pledge ourselves to fight manfully under Christ's banner, and to continue his faithful soldiers and servants to our life's end; while the *mysterious* character of the Holy Eucharist was mainly that which earned for it this name.

We have already found history imbedded in the word 'frank;' but I must bring forward the Franks again, to account for the fact with which we are all familiar, that in the East not Frenchmen alone, but *all* Europeans, are so called. Why, it may be asked, should this be? This wide use of 'Frank' dates from the Crusades; Michaud, the chief French historian of these, finding evidence here that his countrymen took a decided lead, as their gallantry well fitted them to do, in these romantic enterprises of the Middle Ages; impressed themselves so strongly on the imagination of the East as *the* crusading nation

of Europe, that their name was extended to all the warriors of Christendom. He is not here snatching for them more than their just right. A very large proportion of the noblest Crusaders, from Godfrey of Bouillon to St. Louis, as of others who did most to bring these enterprises about, as Peter the Hermit, Pope Urban the Second, St. Bernard, were French, and thus gave, in a way sufficiently easy to explain, an appellation to all.*

To the Crusades also, and to the intense hatred which they roused throughout Christendom against the Mahometan infidels, we owe 'miscreant,' as designating one to whom the vilest principles and practice are ascribed. A 'miscreant,' at the first, meant simply a misbeliever. The name would have been applied as freely, and with as little sense of injustice, to the royal-hearted Saladin as to the vilest wretch that fought in his armies. By degrees, however, those who employed it tinged it more and more with their feeling and passion, more and more lost sight of its primary use, until they used it of any whom they regarded with feelings of abhorrence, such as those which they entertained for an infidel; just as 'Samaritan' was employed by the Jews simply as a term of reproach, and with no thought whether he on whom it was fastened was in fact one of that

* See Fuller, *Holy War*, b. i. c. 13.

detested race or not; where indeed they were quite sure that he was not (John viii. 48). 'Assassin' also, an Arabic word whose story you will find no difficulty in obtaining,—you may read it in Gibbon,*—connects itself with a romantic chapter in the history of the Crusades.

Various explanations of 'cardinal' have been proposed, which should account for the appropriation of this name to the parochial clergy of the city of Rome with the subordinate bishops of that diocese. This appropriation is an outgrowth, and a standing testimony, of the measureless assumptions of the Roman See. One of the favourite comparisons by which that See was wont to set out its relation of superiority to all other Churches of Christendom was this; it was the hinge, or 'cardo,' on which all the rest of the Church, as the door, at once depended and turned. It followed presently upon this that the clergy of Rome were 'cardinales,' as nearest to, and most closely connected with, him who was thus the hinge, or 'cardo,' of all.†

* *Decline and Fall*, c. 64.

† Thus a letter professing to be of Pope Anacletus the First in the first century, but really belonging to the ninth: *Apostolica Sedes cardo et caput omnium Ecclesiarum à Domino est constituta; et sicut cardine ostium regitur, sic hujus S. Sedis auctoritate omnes Ecclesiæ reguntur.* And we have 'cardinal' put in relation with this 'cardo' in a genuine letter of Pope Leo the Ninth: *Clerici summæ Sedis Cardinales dicuntur, cardini utique illi quo cetera moventur, vicinius adhærentes.*

‘Legend’ is a word with an instructive history. We all know what a ‘legend’ means now. It is a tale which is *not* true, which, however historic in form, is not so in fact, claims no serious belief for itself. It was quite otherwise once. By this name of ‘legends’ the annual commemorations of the faith and patience of God’s saints in persecution and death were originally called; these legends in this title which they bore proclaiming that they were worthy to be read, and from this worthiness deriving their name. At a later day, as corruptions spread through the Church, these ‘legends’ grew, in Hooker’s words, ‘to be nothing else but heaps of frivolous and scandalous vanities,’ having been ‘even with disdain thrown out, the very nests which bred them abhorring them.’ How steeped in falsehood, and to what an extent, according to Luther’s indignant turn of the word, the ‘legends’ (*legende*) must have become ‘lyings’ (*lügen*), we can best guess, when we measure the moral forces which must have been at work, before that which was accepted at the first as ‘worthy to be read,’ should have been felt by this very name to announce itself as most unworthy, as belonging at best to the region of fable, if not to that of actual untruth.

An inquiry into the pedigree of ‘dunce’ lays open to us an important page in the intellectual history of Europe. Certain theologians in the Middle Ages were termed Schoolmen; having

been formed and trained in the cloister and cathedral *schools* which Charlemagne and his immediate successors had founded. These were men not to be lightly spoken of, as they often are by those who never read a line of their works, and have not a thousandth part of their wit ; who moreover little guess how many of the most familiar words which they employ, or misemploy, have descended to them from these. ‘Real,’ ‘virtual,’ ‘entity,’ ‘nonentity,’ ‘equivocation,’ all these, with many more unknown to classical Latin, but now almost necessities to us, were first coined by the Schoolmen ; and, passing over from them into the speech of those more or less interested in their speculations, have gradually filtered through the successive strata of society, till now they have reached, some of them, to quite the lowest. At the revival of learning, however, their works fell out of favour: they were not written in classical Latin: the forms in which their speculations were thrown were often unattractive ; it was mainly in their authority that the Roman Church found support for its perilled dogmas. On all these accounts it was esteemed a mark of intellectual progress to have broken with them, and thrown off their yoke. Some, however, still clung to these Schoolmen, and to one in particular, *Duns Scotus*, the chief teacher of the Franciscan Order ; and many times an adherent of the old learning would seek to strengthen his position by an appeal to

its famous doctor, familiarly called Duns ; while those of the new learning would contemptuously rejoin, ' Oh, you are a *Dunsmán*,' or more briefly, ' You are a *Duns*,'—or, ' This is a piece of *duncery* ;' and inasmuch as the new learning was ever enlisting more and more of the genius and scholarship of the age on its side, the title became more and more a term of scorn : ' Remember ye not,' says Tyndal, ' how within this thirty years and far less, the old barking curs, *Dunce's* disciples, and like draff called Scotists, the children of darkness, raged in every pulpit against Greek, Latin, and Hebrew ?' And thus from that conflict long ago extinct between the old and the new learning, that strife between the medieval and the modern theology, we inherit ' dunce ' and ' duncery.' The lot of Duns, it must be confessed, has been a hard one, who, whatever his merits, as a teacher of Christian truth, was assuredly one of the keenest and most subtle-witted of men. He, the ' subtle Doctor ' by pre-eminence, for so his admirers called him, ' the wittiest of the school divines,' as Hooker does not scruple to style him, could scarcely have anticipated, and did not at all deserve, that his name should be turned into a by-word for invincible stupidity.

This is but one example of the singular fortune waiting upon words. We have another of a parallel injustice, in the use which ' mammetry,' a contraction of ' Mahometry,' obtained in our early English. Mahometanism being the most

prominent form of false religion with which our ancestors came in contact, 'mammetry' was used, up to and beyond the Reformation, to designate first any false religion, and then the worship of idols; idolatry being proper to, and a leading feature of, most of the false religions of the world. Men did not pause to remember that Mahometanism is the great exception, being as it is a protest against all idol-worship whatsoever; so that it was a signal injustice to call an idol 'a mammet' or a Mahomet, and idolatry 'mammetry.' To pursue the fortunes of the word a little further, at the next step not religious images only, but dolls were called 'mammets;' and when in *Romeo and Juliet* old Capulet contemptuously styles his daughter 'a whining *mammet*,' the process is strange, yet its every step easy to be traced, whereby the name of the Arabian false prophet is fastened on the fair maiden of Verona.

A misnomer such as this may remind us of the immense importance of possessing such names for things as shall not involve or suggest an error. We have already seen this in the province of the moral life; but in other regions also it nearly concerns us. Resuming, as words do, the past, moulding the future, how important it is that significant facts or tendencies in the world's history should receive their right names. It is a corrupting of the very springs and sources of knowledge, when we bind up not a truth, but an

error, in the very nomenclature which we use. It is the putting of an obstacle which, however imperceptibly, is yet ever at work, hindering any right apprehension of the thing which has been thus erroneously noted.

Out of a sense of this, an eminent German scholar of the last century, writing *On the Influence of Opinions on Speech*, did not stop here, nor make this the entire title of his book, but added another and further clause—*and on the Influence of Speech on Opinions* ;* the matter which fulfils the promise of this latter clause constituting by far the most interesting and original portion of his work : for while the influence of opinions on words is so little called in question that the assertion of it sounds almost like a truism, this, on the contrary, of words on opinions, would doubtless present itself as a novelty to many. And yet it is an influence which has been powerfully felt in every region of human knowledge, in science, in art, in morals, in theology. The reactive energy of words, not merely on the passions of men (for that of course), but on their opinions calmly and deliberately formed, would furnish a very curious chapter in the history of human knowledge and human ignorance.

* *Von dem Einfluss der Meinungen in die Sprache, und der Sprache in die Meinungen*, von J. D. Michaëlis, Berlin, 1760.

Sometimes words with no fault of theirs, for they did not originally bind up any error, will yet draw some error in their train, of which error they will afterwards prove the most effectual bulwark and shield. Let me instance—the author just referred to supplies the example—the word ‘crystal.’ The strange notion concerning the origin of the thing, current among the natural philosophers of antiquity, and which only two centuries ago Sir Thomas Browne thought it worth while to place first and foremost among the *Vulgar Errors* which he undertook to dissipate, was plainly traceable to a confusion occasioned by the name. Crystal, as they supposed, was ice or snow which had undergone such a process of induration, as wholly and for ever to have lost its fluidity ;* and Pliny, backing up one error by another, affirmed that it was only found in regions of extreme cold. The fact is, that the Greek word for crystal originally signified ice ; but was early transferred to that diaphanous quartz which has so much the look of ice, and which alone *we* call by this name ; and then in a little while it was taken for granted that the two, having the same name, were in fact the

* Augustine : Quid est crystallum? Nix est glacie durata per multos annos ita ut a sole vel igne facile dissolvi non possit. So too in Beaumont and Fletcher’s tragedy of *Valentinian*, a chaste matron is said to be ‘cold as crystal *never to be thawed again.*’

same substance ; and this mistake it took ages to correct.

Natural history abounds in legends. In the word 'leopard' one of these has been permanently bound up ; the error, having first given birth to the name, being afterwards itself maintained and propagated by it. The leopard, as is well known, was not for the Greek and Latin zoologists a species by itself, but a mongrel birth of the male panther or pard and the lioness ; and in 'leopard' or 'lion-pard,' this fabled double descent is expressed.* 'Cockatrice' embodies a somewhat similar fable.

It was Eichhorn who first suggested the calling of a certain group of languages, which stand in a marked contradistinction to the Indo-European by the common name of 'Semitic.' A word which should include all these was wanting, and this one was handy and has made its fortune ; at the same time implying, as 'Semitic' does, that these are all languages spoken by races which are descended from Shem, it is eminently calculated to mislead. There are non-Semitic races, the Phœnicians for example, who have spoken a Semitic language ; there are Semitic races who have not spoken one. Against 'Indo-European' the

* This error lasted into modern times ; thus Fuller (*A Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, vol. i. p. 195) ; 'Leopards and mules are properly no creatures.'

same objection may be urged. There are several languages which are European, that is, spoken in Europe, the Maltese, the Finnish, the Hungarian, the Basque, which lie altogether outside of this group.

‘Gothic’ is plainly a misnomer, and has often been a misleader as well, when applied to a style of architecture which belongs not to one, but to all the Germanic tribes; which, moreover, did not come into existence till many centuries after any people called Goths had ceased from the earth. Those, indeed, who first called this medieval architecture ‘Gothic,’ had no intention of ascribing to the Goths the first invention of it, however this language may seem now to bind up in itself an assertion of the kind. ‘Gothic’ was at first a mere random name of contempt. The Goths, with the Vandals, being the standing representatives of the rude in manners and barbarous in taste, the critics who would fain throw scorn on this architecture as compared with that classical Italian which alone seemed worthy of their admiration,* called it ‘Gothic,’ meaning rude and barbarous thereby.

* The name, as the designation of a style of architecture, came to us from Italy. Thus Fuller in his *Worthies*: ‘Let the Italians deride our English and condemn them for *Gothish* buildings.’ See too a very curious expression of men’s sentiments about Gothic architecture as simply barbarous, in Phillips’s *New World of Words*, 1706, s. v. ‘Gothick.’

We who recognize in this Gothic architecture the most wondrous and consummate birth of genius in one region of art, find it hard to believe that this was once a mere title of depreciation and scorn, and sometimes wrongly assume a reference in the word to the people among whom first it arose.

‘Classical’ and ‘romantic,’ names given to opposing schools of literature and art, contain an absurd antithesis ; and either say nothing at all, or say something erroneous. ‘Revival of learning’ is a phrase only partially true when applied to that mighty intellectual movement in Western Europe which marked the close of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth. A revival there might be, and indeed there was, of *Greek* learning at that time ; but there could not be properly affirmed a revival of Latin, inasmuch as it had never been dead ; or, if any will insist on this, had revived nearly two centuries before. ‘Renaissance,’ applied in France to the new direction which art took about the age of Francis the First, is another question-begging word. Very many would entirely deny that the bringing back of an antique pagan spirit, and pagan forms as the utterance of this, into Christian art was a ‘renaissance’ or new birth of it at all.

But inaccuracy of naming may draw after it more serious mischief in regions more important. Nowhere is accuracy more vital than in words

having to do with the chief facts and objects of our faith ; for such words, as Coleridge has observed, are never inert, but constantly exercise an immense reactive influence on those who employ them, even as they spread around them an atmosphere, which those who often use, or often hear them used, unconsciously inhale. The so-called 'Unitarians,' claiming by this name of theirs to be asserters of the unity of the Godhead, claim that which belongs to us by far better right than to them ; which, indeed, belonging of fullest right to us, does not properly belong to them at all. I should, therefore, without any intention of offence, refuse the name to them ; just as I should decline, by calling those of the Roman obedience 'Catholics,' to give up the whole question at issue between us and them. So, also, were I one of them, I should never, however convenient it might sometimes prove, consent to call the great religious movement of Europe in the sixteenth century the 'Reformation.' Such in *our* esteem it was, and in the deepest, truest sense of the word ; a reforming of things that were amiss in the Church. But how any who esteem it a disastrous, and, on their part who brought it about, a most guilty schism, can consent to call it by this name, is surprising.

Let me urge on you here the importance of seeking in every case to acquaint yourselves

with the circumstances under which any body of men who have played an important part in history, above all in the history of your own land, obtained the name by which they were afterwards willing to be known, or which was used for their designation by others. This you may do as a matter of historical inquiry, and keeping entirely aloof in spirit from the scorn, the bitterness, the falsehood, the calumny, out of which very frequently these names were first imposed. Whatever of these may have been at work in them who coined or gave currency to the name, the name itself can never without serious loss be neglected by any who would truly understand the moral significance of the thing ; always something, often much, may be learned from it. Learn, then, about each one of these names which you meet in your studies, whether it was one which men gave to themselves ; or one imposed on them by others, and which they never recognized ; or one which being first imposed by others, was yet in course of time admitted and allowed by themselves. We have examples in all these kinds. Thus the 'Gnostics' called *themselves* such ; the name was of their own devising, and declared that whereof they made their boast ; it was the same with the 'Cavaliers' of our Civil War. 'Quaker,' 'Puritan,' 'Roundhead,' were all, on the contrary, names devised by others, and never accepted by those to whom they were attached ;

while 'Whig' and 'Tory' were nicknames originally of bitterest scorn and party hate, given by two political bodies in England to one another,* the Whig being properly a sour Scottish Covenanter, the Tory an Irish bog-trotting freebooter; while yet these nicknames in tract of time so lost and let go what was offensive in them, that in the end they were adopted by the very parties themselves. The German 'Lutherans' were originally so called by their antagonists.† In the same way 'Methodists' was a title not first taken by the followers of Wesley, but fastened on them by others, while yet they have been subsequently willing, though I suppose with a certain reserve, to accept and to be known by it. 'Capuchin' was a jesting nickname, given by the boys in the streets to that branch of the Franciscans which afterwards accepted it as their proper designation. It was provoked by the peaked and pointed hood (capuccio) which they wore. The story of the 'Gueux' of Holland is familiar to us all.

A 'Premier' or 'Prime Minister,' though unknown to the law of England, is at present one of the institutions of the country. The acknowledged leadership of one member in the Govern-

* In North's *Examen*, p. 321, is a very lively, though not a very impartial, account of the rise of these names.

† Dr. Eck, one of the earliest who wrote against the Reformation, first called the Reformed 'Lutherani.'

ment is a fact of only gradual growth in our constitutional history, but one in which the nation has entirely acquiesced,—nor is there anything invidious now in the name. But in what spirit the Parliamentary Opposition, having coined the term, applied it first to Sir Robert Walpole, is plain from some words of his spoken in the House of Commons, Feb. 11, 1742: ‘Having invested me with a kind of mock dignity, and styled me a *Prime Minister*, they [the Opposition] impute to me an unpardonable abuse of the chimerical authority which they only created and conferred.’

Now of these titles some undoubtedly, like ‘capuchin’ which I instanced just now, stand in no living connexion with those that bear them; and such, though seldom without their instruction, yet plainly are not *so* instructive as others, in which the innermost heart of the thing named so utters itself, that, having mastered the name, we have placed ourselves at the central point, from which best to master everything besides. It is thus with ‘Gnostic’ and ‘Gnosticism:’ in the prominence given to *gnosis* or knowledge, as opposed to faith, lies the key to the whole system. The Greek Church has loved ever to style itself the Holy ‘Orthodox’ Church, the Latin, the Holy ‘Catholic’ Church. Follow up the thoughts which these words suggest. What a world of teaching they contain; above all when brought into direct comparison and opposition one with

the other. How does all which is innermost in the Greek and Roman mind unconsciously reveal itself here; the Greek Church regarding as its chief blazon that its speculation is right, the Latin that its empire is universal. Nor indeed is it merely the Greek and Latin Churches which utter themselves here, but Greece and Rome in their deepest distinctions, as these existed from the beginning. The key to the whole history, Pagan as well as Christian, of each is in these words. We can understand how the one established a dominion in the region of the mind which shall never be overthrown, the other founded an empire in the world whose visible effects shall never be done away. This is an illustrious example; but I am bold to affirm that, in their degree, all parties, religious and political, are known by names that will repay study; by names, to understand which will bring us far to an understanding of their strength and their weakness, their truth and their error, the idea and intention according to which they wrought. Thus take those which have risen up in England. 'Puritans,' 'Fifth-Monarchy Men,' 'Seekers,' 'Levellers,' 'Independents,' 'Friends,' 'Rationalists,' 'Latitudinarians,' 'Freethinkers,' these titles, with many more, have each its significance; and would you understand what any of these schools and parties intended, you must first understand what they were called. From this you must start; even as you must bring back

to this whatever further information you may acquire ; putting your later gains, if possible, in subordination to the name ; at all events in relation and connexion with it.

You will often be able to glean knowledge from the names of things, if not as important as all this, yet interesting in its way. What a record of inventions, how much of the history of commerce, is preserved in names ! Thus the 'magnet' has its name from Magnesia ; the 'baldachin' from 'Baldacco,' the Italian name of Bagdad, from which city the costly silk which composed this canopy originally came. The 'bayonet' tells us, though it is possibly here in error, that it was first made at Bayonne—the 'bilbo,' a finely tempered Spanish blade, at Bilboa—the 'carronade' at the Carron iron-works in Scotland—'worsted' that it was spun at a village so called (in the neighbourhood of Norwich)—'sarsnet' that it is a Saracen manufacture—'cambric' that it reached us from Cambray—'crape' from Cyprus (the earlier form of the word is 'cypres')—'copper' that it too drew its name from the same island, so richly furnished with mines of this metal—'diaper' that it came from Ypres — 'fustian' from Fostat, a suburb of Cairo—'silk' or 'sericus' from the land of the Seres or Chinese—'damask' from Damascus (the 'damson' also is the 'damascene' or Damascus plum)—'arras' from Arras—'shalloon' from Chalons — 'dimity' from Damietta — 'gauze'

from Gaza—‘cordwain’ or ‘cordovan’ from Cordova—‘currants’ from Corinth—‘delf’ from Delft—‘indigo’ (*indicum*) from India—‘gamboge’ from Gambodia—‘agates’ from a Sicilian river, Achates—the ‘turquoise’ from Turkey—the ‘chalcedony’ or onyx from Chalcedon—‘jet’ from a river Gages in Lycia, where this black stone is found.* ‘Rhubarb’ is a corruption of *Rha barbarum*, the root from the savage banks of the Rha or Volga—‘jalap’ is from Jalapa, a town in Mexico—‘jane’ from Genoa—‘parchment’ from Pergamum—‘majolica’ from Majorca—‘faience’ from the town of the same name, the Italian Faenza. The ‘bezant,’ so often named in our early literature, is money of Byzantium; the ‘guinea’ was originally coined (in 1663) of gold brought from the African coast so called. The pound or penny ‘sterling’ was a certain weight of bullion according to the standard of the Easterlings, or Eastern merchants from the Hanse towns on the Baltic. The fashion of the ‘cravat’ was borrowed from the Croats, or Crabats, as this wild irregular soldiery of the Thirty Years’ War used to be called. The ‘biggen,’ a plain cap often mentioned by our early writers, was first worn by the Beguines, communities of pietist women in the

* In Holland’s *Pliny*, the Greek form ‘gagates’ is still retained, though he calls it more commonly ‘jeat’ or ‘geat.’

Middle Ages. England now sends her calicoes and muslins to India and the East; yet these words give standing witness that we once imported them from thence; for 'calico' is from Calicut, and 'muslin' from Moussul, a city in Asiatic Turkey. 'Ermine' is the spoil of the Armenian rat; the 'spaniel' is from Spain, or perhaps from Hispaniola; 'Sherry,' or 'Sherris,' as Shakespeare wrote it, is sent us from Xeres; and 'port' from Oporto. The 'pheasant' reached us from the banks of the Phasis; the 'bantam' from a Dutch settlement in Java of the same name; the 'cherry' was brought by Lucullus from Cerasus, a city in Pontus; the 'peach' declares itself a Persian fruit; the 'quince' has undergone so many changes in its progress through Italian and French to us, that it hardly retains any trace of Cydon (*malum Cydonium*), a town of Crete, from which, however, it is called.

And as things thus keep record in the names which they bear of the quarters from which they reached us, so also will they often do of the persons who, as authors, inventors, or discoverers, or in some other way, stood in near connexion with them. A collection in any language of all the names of persons which have since become names of things—from *nomina appellativa* have become *nomina realia*—would be very curious and interesting. I will enumerate a few. Where the matter is not familiar to you, it will not be

unprofitable to work back from the word or thing to the person, and to learn more accurately the connexion between them.

To begin with mythical antiquity — the Chimæra has given us ‘chimerical,’ Hermes ‘hermetic,’ Pan ‘panic,’ Pæan, being a name of Apollo, the ‘peony,’ Tantalus ‘to tantalize,’ Hercules ‘herculean,’ Proteus ‘protean,’ Vulcan ‘volcano’ and ‘volcanic,’ and Dædalus ‘dedal,’ if this word, on the authority of Spenser and Shelley, may find allowance. Gordius, the Phrygian king who tied that famous ‘gordian’ knot which Alexander cut, will supply a natural transition from mythical to historical. Mausolus, a king of Caria, has left us ‘mausoleum,’ Academus ‘academy,’ Epicurus ‘epicure,’ Philip of Macedon a ‘philippic,’ being such a discourse as Demosthenes once launched against the enemy of Greece, and Cicero ‘cicerone.’ Mithridates, who had made himself poison-proof, gave us the now forgotten word ‘mithridate,’ for antidote ; as from Hippocrates we derived ‘hipocras,’ or ‘ypocras,’ often occurring in our early poets, being a wine supposed to be mingled after his receipt. Gentius, a king of Illyria, gave his name to the plant ‘gentian,’ having been, it is said, the first to discover its virtues. A grammar used to be called a ‘donat’ or ‘donet’ (Chaucer), from Donatus, a Roman grammarian of the fourth century, whose grammar held its place in the schools during the

greater part of the Middle Ages ; just as in Switzerland and Germany now every guide-book is called a 'Bädeker.' Lazarus, perhaps an historical person, has given us 'lazar' and 'lazaretto' ; Veronica and the legend connected with her name, a 'vernicle,' being a napkin with the Saviour's head portrayed on it. Our 'pantaloons' are from St. Pantaleone ; he was the patron saint of the Venetians, who therefore very commonly received Pantaleon as their Christian name ; it was from them transferred to a garment which they much affected. Simon Magus gave us 'simony' ; 'dunce,' as we have seen is derived from Duns Scotus ; while there is a legend that the 'knot' or sandpiper is named from Canute or Knute, with whom this bird was a special favourite. To come to more modern times, and not pausing at Ben Jonson's 'chaucerisms,' Bishop Hall's 'scoganisms,' from Scogan, Edward the Fourth's jester, or his 'aretinisms,' from Aretin ; these being probably not intended even by their authors to endure ; a Roman cobbler named Pasquin has given us the 'pasquil' or 'pasquinade' ; 'patch,' a name of contempt, not unfrequent in Shakespeare, is said to have been the proper name of a favourite fool of Cardinal Wolsey's ; and Colonel Negus in Queen Anne's time to have first mixed the beverage which goes by his name. Lord Orrery was the first for whom an 'orrery' was con-

structed ; and Lord Spencer first wore, or first brought into fashion, a 'spencer.' Dahl, a Swede, introduced the cultivation of the 'dahlia' ; the 'fuchsia' is named after Fuchs, a German botanist of the sixteenth century ; the 'magnolia' after Magnol, a distinguished French botanist of the beginning of the eighteenth ; the 'camelia' was introduced into Europe from Japan in 1731 by Camel, a member of the Society of Jesus. A French Protestant refugee, Tabinet by name, first made 'tabinet' in Dublin ; another Frenchman, the ebenist Boule, in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, gave his name to 'buhl' work ; while yet another, Goulard, a physician of Montpellier, gave his to the soothing lotion, not unknown in our nurseries. In '*tram*-road,' the second syllable of *Outram*, the name of the inventor, survives. The 'ton-tine' was conceived by Tonti, an Italian ; another Italian, Galvani, first noted the phenomena of animal electricity or 'galvanism' ; while a third, Volta, gave a name to the 'voltaic' battery. 'Nicotine,' the poison recently drawn from tobacco, goes back for its title to Nicot, a physician, who first introduced the tobacco-plant to the general notice of Europe. Dolomieu, a French geologist, first called attention to a peculiar formation of rocks in Eastern Tyrol, called 'dolomites' after him. 'Martinet,' 'mackintosh,' 'doyly,' 'brougham,' 'to macadamize,' 'to burke,' are all names of persons or

formed from persons, and then transferred to things, on the ground of some sort of connexion between the one and the other.*

Nor less shall we find history, at all events

* Several such words we have in common with the French. Of their own they have 'sardanapalisme,' any piece of profuse luxury, from Sardanapalus; for 'lambiner,' to dally or loiter over a task, they are indebted to Denis Lambin, a worthy Greek scholar of the sixteenth century, but accused of sluggish movement and wearisome diffuseness in style. Every reader of Pascal's *Provincial Letters* will remember Escobar, the great casuist of the Jesuits, whose convenient subterfuges for the relaxation of the moral law have there been made famous. To the notoriety which he thus acquired, he owes his introduction into the French language; where 'escobarder' is used in the sense of to equivocate, and 'escobarderie' of subterfuge or equivocation. A pale green colour is in French called 'céladon' from a personage of this name, of a feeble and *fade* tenderness, who figures in *Astrée*, a famous romance of the seventeenth century. An unpopular minister of finance, M. de Silhouette, unpopular because he sought to cut down unnecessary expenses in the State, lent his name to the slight and thus cheap black outline portrait called a 'silhouette' (Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, vol. xix. pp. 94, 95). In the 'mansarde' roof we have the name of Mansart, the architect who introduced it. In 'marivaudage' the name of Marivaux is bound up, who was noted for the affected euphuism which goes by this name; very much as the sophist Gorgias gave γοργιάζειν to the Greek. The point of contact between the 'fiacre' and St. Fiacre is well known. Hackney carriages, when first established in Paris, waited for their hiring in the court of an hotel which was adorned with an image of the Scottish saint. I need hardly add 'guillotine.'

literary history, in the noting of the popular characters in books, from whose names words which have passed into common speech have been derived. Thus from Homer we have 'mentor' for a monitor; 'stentorian' for loud-voiced; and inasmuch as, with all of Hector's nobleness, there is a certain amount of big talk about him, he has given us 'to hector';* while the medieval romances about the siege of Troy ascribe to Pandarus that shameful ministry out of which his name has passed into the words 'to pander' and 'pandarism.' 'Rodomontade' is from Rodomonte, a hero of Boiardo; who yet does not bluster and boast, as the word founded on his name would seem to imply; adopted by Ariosto, it was by him changed into Rodamonte; 'thrasonical' is from Thraso, the braggart of the Roman Comedy. Cervantes has given us 'quixotic'; Swift 'lilliputian'; to Molière the French language owes 'tartuffe' and 'tartufferie.' 'Reynard' with us is a duplicate for fox, while in French 'renard' has quite excluded the old 'volpils,' being originally no more than the proper name of the fox-hero, the vulpine Ulysses, in that famous beast-epic of the middle ages, *Reineke Fuchs*; the immense popularity of which we gather from many evidences—from none more clearly than from this. 'Chanticleer' is the name

* See Col. Mure, *Language and Literature of Ancient Greece*, vol. i. p. 350.

of the cock, and 'Bruin' of the bear in the same poem.* These have not made fortune to the same extent of actually putting out of use names which before existed, but still have become quite familiar to us all.

Occasionally a name will embody and give permanence to an error; as when in 'America' the discovery of the New World, which belonged to Columbus, is ascribed to another eminent discoverer, but one who had no title to this honour, even as he was entirely guiltless of any attempt to usurp it for himself.† Our 'turkeys' are not from Turkey, as their name seems to say, and as was assumed by those who imposed that name, but from that New World where alone they are native. This error the French in another shape repeat, calling it 'dinde,' originally 'poulet d'Inde,' or Indian fowl. There lies in 'gipsy,' or Egyptian, the assumption that Egypt was the original home of this strange people; as was widely believed when they made their first appearance in Europe early in the fifteenth century. That this, however, was a mistake, their language

* See Génin, *Des Variations du Langage Français*, p. 12.

† Humboldt has abundantly shown this (*Cosmos*, vol. ii. note 457). He ascribes its general reception to its introduction into a popular work on geography, published in 1507. The subject has also been very carefully treated by Major, *Life of Prince Henry the Navigator*, 1868, pp. 382-388.

leaves no doubt; proclaiming as it does that they are wanderers from a more distant East, an outcast tribe from Hindostan. 'Bohemians,' as they are called by the French, testifies to an error of a like character, to the fact that at their first apparition they were supposed by the common people in France to be the expelled Hussites of Bohemia.

Where words have not embodied an error, it will yet sometimes happen that the sound or spelling of a word will *to us* suggest a wrong explanation, against which in these studies it will need to be on our guard. There has been a stage in most boys' geographical knowledge, when they have taken for granted that Jutland was so called, not because it was the land of the Jutes, but on account of its *jutting* out into the sea in so remarkable a manner. At a much later period of their education, 'Aborigines,' being the proper name of an Italian tribe, might very easily lead them astray.* As the oak, in Greek *δρῦς*, plays no inconsiderable part in the ritual of the Druids, it is not wonderful if most students at one time of their lives have put the two in etymological connexion. The Greeks, who so characteristically assumed that words in all languages were to be explained by the Greek, did so of course. So, too, there have not been wanting those who have traced in the

* See Pauly, *Encyclop.* s. v. Latium.

name 'Jove' a heathen reminiscence of the awful name of Jehovah; while yet, however specious this may seem, on closer scrutiny the words declare that they have no connexion with one another, any more than have 'Iapetus' and 'Japhet,' or, I may add, 'God' and 'good,' which as yet by a moral instinct men are tempted to put into an etymological relation with each other.

Sometimes a falsely-assumed derivation has reacted upon and modified the spelling. Thus the name of the Celtic tribe whom we call the 'Picts,' would not have come down to us exactly in this form, but for the notion which early got abroad, that they were so called from their custom of tattooing or painting their bodies, that in fact 'Pict' meant 'the painted.' This in itself is most unlikely. We can quite conceive the Romans giving this name to the *first* barbarous people they encountered, who were in the habit of thus painting themselves. For a custom like this, forcing itself on the eye, and impressing itself on the imagination, exactly supplies the motive which gives birth to a name. But *after* they had been long familiar with the tribes in southern Britain, among whom this painting or tattooing was equally in use, it is inconceivable that they should have applied it to a northern tribe, with which they first came in contact at a far later day. The name is more probably the original Celtic one, 'peichta,' or

‘the fighters,’ slightly modified to give it a Latin shape and sound in the mouths of the Romans. It may have been the same with ‘hurricane.’ In the tearing up and *hurrying* away of the *canes* in the sugar plantations by this West Indian tornado, many have seen an explanation of the name; just in the same way as the Latin ‘calamitas’ has been derived from ‘calamus,’ the stalk of the corn. In both cases the etymology is faulty; ‘hurricane,’ probably a Carib word at the first, is only a transplanting into our tongue of the Spanish ‘huracan’ or the French ‘ouragan.’

It is a signal evidence of the conservative powers of language, that we may continually trace in speech the record of customs and states of society which have now passed so entirely away as to survive in these words alone. For example, a ‘stipulation’ or agreement is so called, as many affirm, from ‘stipula,’ a straw; and tells of a Roman custom, that when two persons would make a mutual engagement with one another,* they would break a straw between them. We all know what fact of English history is laid up in ‘curfew,’ or ‘couvre-feu.’ The ‘limner,’ or ‘lumineur’ (luminatore), throws us back on a time when the *illumination* of manu-

* See on this disputed point, and on the relation between the Latin ‘stipulatio’ and the old German custom not altogether dissimilar, J. Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, pp. 121, sqq.

scripts was a leading occupation of the painter. 'Thrall' and 'thraldom' descend to us from a period when it was the custom to *thrill* or drill the ear of a slave in token of servitude; a custom in use among the Jews (Deut. xv. 17), and retained by our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, who were wont thus to pierce at the church door the ears of their bond-servants. By 'lumber,' we are, or might be, taught that Lombards were the first pawnbrokers, even as they were the first bankers, in England; a 'lumber'-room being a 'lombard'-room, or a room where the pawnbroker stored his pledges.* Nor need I do more than remind you that in our common phrase of '*signing* our name,' we preserve a record of a time when such first rudiments of education as the power of writing, were the portion of so few, that it was not as now an exception, but the custom, of most persons to make their mark or 'sign;' great barons and kings themselves not being ashamed to set this *sign* or cross to the weightiest documents. To 'subscribe' the name would more accurately express what now we do. As often as we term arithmetic the science of 'calculation,' we allude to that rudimental period of the science of numbers, when pebbles (*calculi*) were used, as now among savage tribes they often are, to help the practice of counting; the Greeks did the same in a word of theirs (*ψηφίζειν*); as

* See my *Select Glossary*, s. v. Lumber.

in another (πεμπάζειν) record of a period was kept when the *five* fingers were so employed. 'Expend,' 'expense,' tell us that money was once weighed out (Gen. xxxiii. 16), not counted out as now. In 'library' we preserve the fact that books were written on the bark (liber) of trees; in 'volume' that they were rolls; in 'book' itself that they were beechen tablets; as in 'paper,' that the Egyptian papyrus, 'the paper reeds by the brooks,' furnished at one time the chief material for writing.

Names thus so often surviving things, we have no right to turn an etymology into an argument. There was a notable attempt to do this in the controversy so earnestly carried on between the Greek and Latin Churches concerning the bread, whether it should be leavened or unleavened, that was used at the Table of the Lord. Those of the Eastern Church constantly urged that the Greek word for bread (and in Greek was the authoritative record of the first institution of this sacrament), implied, according to its root, that which was raised or lifted up; not, therefore, to use a modern term, sad or set, or, in other words, unleavened bread, but such rather as had undergone the process of fermentation. But even if the etymology on which they relied (*ἄρτος* from *αἴρω* to raise) had been as certain as it is questionable, they could draw no argument of the slightest worth from so remote an etymology, and one which had so long fallen out of

the consciousness of those who employed the word.

Theories too, which long since were utterly renounced, have yet left their traces behind them. Thus 'good humour,' 'bad humour,' 'humours,' and, strangest contradiction of all, '*dry* humour,' rest altogether on a now exploded, but a very old and largely accepted, theory of medicine; according to which there were four principal moistures or 'humours' in the natural body, on the due proportion and combination of which the disposition alike of body and mind depended.* Our present use of 'temper' has its origin in the same theory; the due admixture, or right tempering, of these humours gave what was called the happy temper, or mixture, which, thus existing inwardly, manifested itself also outwardly; while 'distemper,' which we still employ in the sense of sickness, was that evil frame either of a man's body or his mind (for it was used of both) which had its rise in an unsuitable mingling of these humours. In these instances, as in many more, the great streams of thought and feeling have changed their course, flowing now in quite other channels from those which once they filled, but have left these words as abiding memorials of the channels in which once they ran.

Other singular examples we have of the way

* See the *Prologue* to Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*.

in which the record of old errors, themselves dismissed long ago, may yet survive in language,—being bound up in words, which grew into use when those errors found credit, and which maintain their currency still. The mythology which our ancestors brought with them from their German or Scandinavian homes is as much extinct for us as are the Lares, Larvæ, and Lemures of heathen Rome; yet the deposit it has permanently left in that well-stored antiquarian museum, the English language, is not inconsiderable. ‘Lubber,’ ‘dwarf,’ ‘oaf,’ ‘droll,’ ‘wight,’ ‘urchin,’ ‘hag,’ ‘night-mare,’ ‘gramary,’ ‘Old Nick,’ ‘changeling’ (wechselkind), suggest themselves, as all bequeathed to us by that old Gothic demonology. No one now puts any faith in astrology, counts that the planet under which a man is born will affect his temperament, make him for life of a disposition grave or gay, lively or severe. Yet our language affirms as much; for we speak of men as ‘jovial,’ or ‘saturnine,’ or ‘mercurial’—‘jovial,’ as being born under the planet Jupiter or Jove, which was the joyfullest star, and of happiest augury of all: * a gloomy severe person is said to be ‘saturnine,’ born, that is, under the planet Saturn, who makes those that own his influence, being born when he was in the ascendant, grave

* ‘Jovial’ in Shakespeare’s time (see *Cymbeline*, Act 5, Sc. 4) had not forgotten its connexion with Jove.

and stern as himself: another we call 'mercurial,' or light-hearted, as those born under the planet Mercury were accounted to be. The same faith in the influence of the stars survives in 'disastrous,' 'ill-starred,' 'ascendancy,' 'lord of the ascendant,' and, indeed, in 'influence' itself. A stone coffin may be still a 'sarcophagus,' without thereby implying that it has any special property of consuming the flesh of bodies which are laid within it. What a record of old speculations, old certainly as Aristotle, and not yet exploded in the time of Milton,* does the word 'quintessence' contain. Again, what curious legends belong to the 'sardonic,' † or 'Sardinian,' laugh; a laugh caused, as was supposed, by a plant growing in Sardinia, of which they who ate, died laughing; to the 'amethyst,' esteemed, as the word implies, a preventive or antidote of drunkenness; and to other words not a few, which are employed by us still.

A question presents itself here, one which is not merely speculative; for it has before now become a veritable case of conscience with some whether they ought to use words which originally rested on, and so seem still to affirm, some superstition or untruth. This question has practically settled itself; the words will keep their ground:

* See *Paradise Lost*, 3, 714-719.

† See an excellent history of this word in Rost and Palm's *Greek Lexicon*, s.v. *σαρδάνιος*.

but further, they have a right to do this ; for no word need be considered so to root itself in its etymology, and to draw its sap and strength from thence, that it cannot detach itself from this, and acquire the rights of an independent existence. And thus our *weekly* newspapers commit no absurdity in calling themselves '*journals*,' or '*diurnals*;' nor we when we name that a '*journey*' which occupied not one, but several, days ; we involve ourselves in no real contradiction, speaking of a '*quarantine*' of five, ten, or any number of days more or fewer than *forty* ; a population may be said to have been '*decimated*' by a plague, though a tenth of it has not perished. In like manner the wax of our '*candles*' ('*candela*,' from '*candeo*') is not necessarily *white* ; our '*rubrics*' are such still, though seldom printed in *red* ink ; neither need our '*miniatures*' quit their name, though they are no longer painted with *minium* or carmine ; there are '*palaces*' which are not built on the Palatine Hill ; and '*nausea*' which is not *sea-sickness*. I remember once asking a class of school-children, whether an announcement which during one very hard winter appeared in the papers, of a '*white blackbird*' having been shot, was correctly worded, or self-contradictory and absurd. The less thoughtful members of the class instantly pronounced against it ; while after a little consideration, two or three made answer that it was perfectly correct, that, while

no doubt the bird had originally obtained this name from its blackness, yet 'blackbird' was now the name of a species, and one so cleaving to it, as not to be forfeited, even when the blackness had quite disappeared. We do not question the right of the '*New Forest*' to retain this title, though it has now stood for nigh eight hundred years; nor of 'Naples' to be *New City* (Neapolis) still, after an existence three or four times as long.

It must, then, be esteemed a piece of ethical prudery, and an ignorance of the laws which languages obey, when the early Quakers refused to employ the names commonly given to the days of the week, and substituted for these, 'first day,' 'second day,' and so on. This they did, as is well known, on the ground that it became not Christian men to give that sanction to idolatry which was involved in the ordinary style—as though every time they spoke of Wednesday they were rendering homage to Woden, of Thursday to Thor, of Friday to Freya, and thus with the rest.* Now it is quite

* It is curious to find Fuller prophesying, a very few years before, that at some future day such a protest as theirs might actually be raised (*Church History*, b. ii. cent. 6): 'Thus we see the whole week bescattered with Saxon idols, whose pagan gods were the godfathers of the days, and gave them their names. This some zealot may behold as the object of a necessary reformation, desiring to have the days of the week new dipt, and called after

intelligible that the early Christians, living in the midst of a still rampant heathenism, should have objected, as we know they did, to 'dies *Solis*,' or Sunday, to express the first day of the week, their Lord's-Day. But when the Quakers raised *their* protest, the case was altogether different. The false gods whose names were bound up in these words had ceased to be worshipped in England for about a thousand years; the words were wholly disengaged from their etymologies, which probably not one in a thousand was so much as aware of. Moreover, had these precisians in speech been consistent, they could not have stopped where they did. Every new acquaintance with the etymology or primary use of words would have entangled them in new embarrassment, would have required them still further to purge their vocabulary. 'To charm,' 'to bewitch,' 'to fascinate,' 'to enchant,' would have been no longer lawful words for those who had outlived the belief in magic, and in the power of the evil eye; nor 'lunacy,' nor 'lunatic,' for such as did not consider that the moon had anything to do with mental unsoundness; nor 'panic' fear, for those who believed that the great god Pan was indeed dead; nor 'auguries,' nor 'auspices,' for those to whom divination was

other names. Though, indeed, this supposed scandal will not offend the wise, as beneath their notice; and cannot offend the ignorant, as above their knowledge.'

nothing ; while to speak of ' initiating ' a person into the ' mysteries ' of an art, would have been utterly heathenish language. Nay, they must have found fault with the language of Holy Scripture itself ; for a word of honourable use in the New Testament, expressing the function of an interpreter (it reappears in our ' hermeneutics '), is directly derived from and embodies the name of Hermes, a heathen deity, and one who did not, like Woden, Thor, and Freya, pertain to a long extinct mythology, but to one existing at that very moment in its strength. And how was it, we may ask, that St. Paul did not protest against a Christian woman retaining the name of Phœbe (Rom. xvi. 1), a goddess of the same mythology ?

The rise and fall of words, the honour which in tract of time they exchanged for dishonour, and the dishonour for honour—all which in my last lecture I contemplated mainly from an ethical point of view—is in a merely historic aspect scarcely less remarkable. Very curious is it to watch the varying fortune of words—the extent to which with them, as with persons and families, some have improved their position in the world, attaining to far greater dignity than seemed destined for them at the beginning, while others in a manner quite as notable have lost caste, have descended from their high estate to common and even ignoble uses. Titles of dignity and honour have naturally a peculiar

liability to be some lifted up, and some cast down. Of words which have risen in the world, the French 'maréchal' affords us an excellent example. 'Maréchal,' as Howell has said, 'at first was the name of a smith-farrier, or one that dressed horses'—which indeed it is still—but it climbed by degrees to that height that the chiefest commanders of the gendarmery are come to be called marshals.' But if this has risen, our 'alderman' has fallen. Whatever the civic dignity of an alderman may now be, still it must be owned that the word has lost much since the time that the alderman was only second in rank and position to the king. Sometimes a word will keep or even improve its place in one language, while at the same time it declines from it in another. 'Demoiselle' (dominicella) cannot be said to have lost ground in French, however 'donzelle' may; while 'damhele,' being the same word, designates in Walloon the farm-girl who minds the cows. 'Pope' is the highest ecclesiastical dignity in the Latin Church; every parish priest is a 'pope' in the Greek. 'Queen,' if indeed it and 'quean' be the same word, has had a double fortune. In one way spelt it has more than kept the dignity with which it started, being the title given to the lady of the kingdom; in the other way spelt it is a designation not untinged with scorn and contempt. 'Squatter' remains for us in England very much where it was; in Australia it is now

the name by which the landed aristocracy are willing to be known.*

After all which has thus been adduced, you will scarcely deny that we have a right to speak of a history in words. Now suppose that the pieces of money which in the intercourse and traffic of daily life are passing through our hands, had each one something of its own which made it more or less worthy of note ; if on one was stamped some striking maxim, on another some important fact, on the third a memorable date ; if others were works of finest art, graven with rare and beautiful devices, or bearing the head of some ancient sage or heroic king ; while others, again, were the sole surviving monuments of mighty nations that once filled the world with their fame ; what a careless indifference to our own improvement—to all which men hitherto had felt or wrought—would it argue in us, if we were content that these should come and go, should stay by us or pass from us, without our vouchsafing to them so much as one serious regard. Such a currency there is, a currency intellectual and spiritual of no meaner worth, and one with which we have to transact so much of the higher business of our lives. Let us see that we come not in this matter under the condemnation of any such incurious dulness as that which I have imagined.

* Dilke, *Greater Britain*, vol. ii. p. 40.

LECTURE V.

ON THE RISE OF NEW WORDS.

YOU will find it not less interesting than instructive to take note of the periods when great and significant words, or sometimes such as can hardly claim these epithets, have risen up, with the circumstances attending their rise. Hardly less interesting than these are new uses of old words. The different portions of my subject so run into one another, that this matter I have, though unwillingly, already anticipated in part; yet it is one which abundantly deserves a lecture to itself. Indeed I am persuaded that a volume might be written, such as would have few to rival it in interest, which should do no more than indicate, and, where advisable, quote, the first writer or the first document wherein a new word, or an old word employed in a new sense—being words that have afterwards played an important part in the world's history—has appeared. An English poet, too early lost, has very grandly described the emotion of—

‘some watcher of the skies,
When a new planet swims into his ken.’

The feeling wherewith we watch the rise above the horizon of words, destined it may be to shine for ever as luminaries in the moral and intellectual heaven above us, will not be very different from his.

But a caution is needful here. We must not assume in every case, or indeed in most cases, that the first rise of a word, and its first appearance within the scope of our vision, will be identical in time. Sometimes they will be so ; and we may watch the actual birth of a word, and affirm with confidence that at such a time and on such an occasion it first saw the light—in this book, or from the lips of that man. Of another we can only say, About this time and near about this spot it first came into being, for we first meet it in such an author and under such and such conditions. So mere a fragment of ancient literature has come down to us, that, while the earliest appearance there of a word is still most instructive to note, it cannot with any confidence be affirmed to mark the exact time of its nativity. And even in the modern world we must in most instances be contented to fix a period, we may perhaps add a locality, within the limits of which the term must have been born, either in legitimate scientific travail, or the child of some flash of genius, or the produce of some *generatio æquivoca*, the necessary result of exciting predisposing causes ; at the same time seeking by further

research ever to narrow this period more and more.

To speak first of words religious and ecclesiastical. Very noteworthy, and in some sort epoch-making, must be regarded the first appearance of the following:—‘Christian;’¹ ‘Trinity;’² ‘Catholic,’ as applied to the Church;³ ‘canonical,’ as a distinctive title of the received Scriptures;⁴ ‘New Testament,’ as describing the complex of the sacred books of the New Covenant;⁵ ‘Gospels,’ as applied to the four inspired records of the life of our Lord.⁶ We notice, too, with interest, the first coming up of ‘monk’ and ‘nun,’⁷ marking as they do the beginnings of the monastic system;—of ‘transubstantiation,’⁸ of ‘limbo’⁹ in its theological sense; witnessing as these do to the *consolida-*

¹ Acts xi. 26.

² Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.* c. 3.

³ Ignatius, *Ad Smyr.* c. 8.

⁴ Origen, *Opp.* vol. iii. p. 36 (ed. De la Rue).

⁵ Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 4. 1; *Adv. Prax.* 15. 20.

⁶ Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 1. 66.

⁷ ‘Nun’ (nonna) first appears in Jerome (*Ad Eustoch. Ep.* 22); ‘monk’ (monachus) a little earlier: Rutilius, a Latin versifier of the fifth century, who still clung to the old Paganism, gives the derivation:

Ipsi se *monachos* Graio cognomine dicunt,
Quod *solī* nullo vivere teste volunt.

⁸ Hildebert, Bishop of Tours († 1134), is the first to use it (*Serm.* 93).

⁹ Thomas Aquinas is the first to use ‘limbus’ in this sense.

tion of errors which had long been floating in the Church.

Scarcely less instructive to note is the earliest apparition of names historical and geographical, above all of such as have since been often on the lips of men ; as the first mention which we have of 'Asia ;'¹ of 'India ;'² of 'Europe ;'³ of 'Macedonia ;'⁴ of 'Greeks ;'⁵ of 'Germans' and 'Germany ;'⁶ of 'Alemanni ;'⁷ of 'Franks ;'⁸ of 'Prussia' and 'Prussians ;'⁹ of 'Normans ;'¹⁰ the earliest notice by any Greek author of Rome ;¹¹ the first use of 'Italy' as comprehending the entire Hesperian peninsula,¹² of 'Asia Minor' to designate the Asia on this side

¹ Æschylus, *Prometheus*, 412.

² Id. *Suppl.* 282.

³ Herodotus, iv. 36.

⁴ Id. v. 17.

⁵ Aristotle, *Meteor.* i. 14. But his Γραικοί are only an insignificant tribe, near Dodona. How it came to pass that Græci, or Graii, was the Latin name by which all the Hellenes were known, must always remain a mystery.

⁶ Probably first in the *Commentaries* of Cæsar ; see Grimm, *Gesch. d. Deutschen Sprache*, p. 773.

⁷ Spartian, *Caracalla*, c. 9.

⁸ Vopiscus, *Aurel.* c. 7 ; about A.D. 240.

⁹ 'Pruzia' and 'Pruzzi' first appear in the *Life of St. Adalbert*, written by his fellow-labourer Gaudentius, between 997-1006.

¹⁰ In the *Geographer of Ravenna*.

¹¹ Probably in Hellanicus, a contemporary of Herodotus.

¹² In the time of Augustus Cæsar ; see Niehbuhr, *History of Rome*, Engl. Translation, vol. i. p. 12.

Taurus.¹ Interesting is it to note who it was that first gave to the newly-discovered continent in the West the name of 'America,' and when; and to us Englishmen far more interesting the time when this island exchanged its earlier name of Britain for 'England;' or, again, when it resumed 'Great Britain' as its official designation. So also, to confirm our assertion by examples from another quarter, it cannot be unprofitable to mark the exact moment at which 'tyrant' and 'tyranny,' forming so distinct an epoch as it does in the political history of Greece, first appeared;² when, and

¹ Orosius, I. 2.: in the fifth century of our era.

² In the writings of Archilochus, about 700 B.C. A 'tyrant' was not for Greeks a bad king, who abused a rightful position to purposes of lust or cruelty or other wrong. It was of the essence of such that he had attained supreme dominion through a violation of the laws and liberties of the state; having done which, whatever the moderation of his after-rule, he would not escape the name. Thus the mild and bounteous Pisistratus was 'tyrant' of Athens, while a Christian the Second of Denmark, 'the Nero of the North,' would not in Greek eyes have been one. It was to their honour that they did not allow the course of the word to be arrested or turned aside by occasional or partial exceptions in the manner of the exercise of this ill-gotten dominion; but in the hateful secondary sense which 'tyrant' with them acquired, and which we have adopted, the moral conviction, justified by all experience, spake out, that the ill-gotten would be ill-kept; that the 'tyrant' in the earlier sense of the word, dogged by suspicion, fear, and an evil

from whom, the fabric of the external universe first received the title of 'cosmos,' or beautiful order ;* with much more of the same kind.

Let us return to one of these names, and see what may be learned from a knowledge of the time and place of its first appearance. It is one the coming up of which has found special record in the Book of life : 'The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch' (Acts xi. 26). That we have here a notice curious and interesting, all would acknowledge, even as nothing can be otherwise which relates to the infancy of the Church. Some, perhaps, would see in it no more than this ; and yet, if we question this notice a little closer, how much it contains, and is waiting to yield up to us. What light it throws on the whole story of the apostolic Church to know where and when this name of 'Christians' was first imposed on the faithful ; for imposed by adversaries it certainly was, not devised by themselves, however afterwards they may have learned to glory in it as the name of highest dignity and honour. They did not call themselves, but, as is expressly recorded, they 'were called,' Christians

conscience, must, by an almost inevitable law, become a 'tyrant' in our later sense of the word.

* Pythagoras, born B.C. 570, is said to have been the first who made this application of the word. For much of interest on its history see Humboldt, *Kosmos*, 1846. English edit., vol. i. p. 371.

first at Antioch ; in agreement with which statement, the name occurs nowhere in Scripture, except on the lips of those alien from, or opposed to, the faith (Acts xxvi. 28 ; 1 Pet. iv. 16). And as it was a name imposed by adversaries, so among those adversaries it was plainly the heathen, and not the Jews; who were its authors; for these last would never have called the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, 'Christians,' or those of Christ, the very point of their opposition to Him being, that He was *not* the Christ, but a false pretender to the name.*

Starting then from this point, that 'Christians' was a title given to the disciples by the heathen, what may we deduce from it further? At Antioch they first obtained this name—at the city, that is, which was the head-quarters of the Church's missions to the heathen, in the same sense as Jerusalem had been the head-quarters of those to the seed of Abraham. It was there, and among the faithful there, that a conviction of the world-wide destination of the Gospel arose; there it was first plainly seen as intended for all kindreds of the earth. Hitherto the faithful in Christ had been called by their adversaries, and indeed often were still called 'Galileans,' or

* Compare Tacitus (*Annal.* xv. 24): Quos *vulgus* . . . Christianos appellabat. It is curious too that, although a Greek word and coined in a Greek city, the termination is Latin. Χριστιανός is formed on the model of Romanus, Albanus, Pompeianus, and the like.

‘Nazarenes,’—both names which indicated the Jewish cradle in which the Church had been nursed, and that the world saw in the new society no more than a Jewish sect. But it was plain that the Church had now, even in the world’s eyes, chipped its Jewish shell. The name ‘Christians,’ or those of Christ, while it told that Christ and the confession of Him was felt even by the heathen to be the sum and centre of this new faith, showed also that they comprehended now, not all which the Church would be,—no mere sect and variety of Judaism, but a Society with a mission and destination of its own. Nor will the thoughtful reader fail to observe that the coming up of this name is by closest juxtaposition connected in the sacred narrative, and still more closely in the Greek than in the English, with the arrival at Antioch and the preaching there of that Apostle, who was God’s appointed instrument for bringing the Church into the recognition of its destination for all men. As so often happens with the rise of new names, the rise of this one marked a new epoch in the Church’s life, and that it was entering upon a new stage of its development.* It is a small matter, yet not

* Rénan (*Les Apôtres*, pp. 233–236) has much interesting on this matter. I quote a few words ; though even in them the spirit in which the whole book is conceived does not fail to make itself felt : L’heure où une création nouvelle reçoit son nom est solennelle ; car le nom est le signe définitif de l’existence. C’est par le nom qu’un

without its own interest, that the invention of this name is laid by St. Luke,—for so, I think, we may confidently say,—to the credit of the Antiochenes. Now the idle, frivolous, and witty inhabitants of Antioch were famous in all antiquity for the invention of nicknames; it was a manufacture for which their city was famous. And thus it was exactly the place where beforehand we might have expected that such a title, being a nickname or little better in their mouths who devised it, should first come into being.

This one example is sufficient to show that new words will often repay any attention which we may bestow upon them, and upon the conditions under which they were born. I proceed to consider the causes of their birth, the periods when a language is most fruitful in them, the quarters from which they usually proceed, with some other interesting phenomena about them.

être individuel ou collectif devient lui-même, et sort d'un autre. La formation du mot 'chrétien' marque ainsi la date précise où l'Église de Jésus se sépara du judaïsme. . . . Le christianisme est complètement détaché du sein de sa mère; la vraie pensée de Jésus a triomphé de l'indécision de ses premiers disciples; l'Église de Jérusalem est dépassée; l'Araméen, la langue de Jésus, est inconnue à une partie de son école; le christianisme parle Grec; il est lancé définitivement dans le grand tourbillon du monde grec et romain; d'où il ne sortira plus.

And first of the causes which give them birth. The cause which more than any other makes new words necessary, and evokes such as shall supply this necessity, is this—namely, that in the appointments of highest Wisdom there are epochs in the world's history, in which, more than at other times, new moral and spiritual forces are at work, stirring to their central depths the hearts of men. When it is thus with a people, they make claims on their language, never made on it before. It is required to utter truths, to express ideas, which were remote from it hitherto ; for which therefore the adequate expression will naturally not be forthcoming at once, these new thoughts and feelings being larger and deeper than any with which hitherto the speakers of that tongue had been familiar. It fares with a language then, as it would fare with a river bed, suddenly required to deliver a far larger volume of waters than had hitherto been its wont. It would in such a case be nothing strange, if the waters surmounted their banks, broke forth on the right hand and on the left, forced new channels with a certain violence for themselves. This indeed they must do. Now it was exactly thus that it fared—for there could be no more illustrious examples—with the languages of Greece and Rome, when it was demanded of them that they should be vehicles of the truths of revelation.

These languages, as they already existed,

might have sufficed, and did suffice, for heathenism, sensuous and finite; but they did not suffice for the spiritual and infinite, for the truths at once so mighty and so new which claimed to find utterance in the language of men. And thus it continually befel, that the new thought must weave a new garment for itself, those which it found ready made being narrower than that it could wrap itself in them; the new wine must find new vessels for itself, that both might be preserved, the old being neither strong enough nor expansive enough to hold it.* Thus, not to speak of mere technical matters, which would claim an utterance, how could the Greek language possess a word for 'idolatry,' so long as the sense of the awful contrast between the worship of the living God and of dead things had not risen up in their minds that spoke it? But when Greek began to be the native language of men, to whom this distinction and contrast was the most earnest and deepest conviction of their lives, words such as 'idolatry,' 'idolater,' of necessity appeared. The heathen did not claim for their deities to be 'searchers of hearts,' did not disclaim for them the being 'accepters of persons;' such attributes of power and right-

* Rénan, speaking on this matter, says of the early Christians: *La langue leur faisait défaut. Le Grec et le Sémitique les trahissaient également. De là cette énorme violence que le Christianisme naissant fit au langage (Les Apôtres, p. 71).*

eousness entered not into their minds as pertaining to the objects of their worship. The Greek language, therefore, so long as they only employed it, had not the words corresponding. It, indeed, could not have had them, as the Jewish Hellenistic Greek could not be without them. How useful a word is 'theocracy;' what good service it has rendered in presenting a certain idea clearly and distinctly to the mind; yet where, except in the bosom of the same Jewish Greek, could it have been born?*

These difficulties, which were felt the most strongly when the thought and feeling that had been at home in the Hebrew, the original language of inspiration, needed to be transferred into Greek, reappeared, though not in quite so aggravated a form, when that which had gradually woven for itself in the Greek an adequate array, again demanded to find a suitable attire in the Latin. An example of the difficulty, and of the way in which it was ultimately overcome, will illustrate this far better than long disquisitions. The classical language of Greece had a word for 'saviour,' which, though often degraded to unworthy uses, bestowed as a title of honour not merely on the false gods of heathendom, but sometimes on men, such as better deserved to be styled 'destroyers' than 'saviours' of their

* We preside at its birth in a passage of Josephus, *Con. Apion.* ii. 16.

fellows, was yet in itself not unequal to the setting forth the central office and dignity of Him, who came into the world to save it. Like some profaned temple, it needed a new consecration—but not to be abolished, and another built in its room. With the Latin it was otherwise. The language seemed to lack a word, which in one shape or another Christians needed to have continually on their lips: indeed Cicero, than whom none could know better the resources of his own tongue, remarkably enough had noted that it possessed no single equivalent to the Greek ‘saviour.’* ‘Salvator’ would have been the natural word; but the literary Latin of the best times, though it had ‘salus’ and ‘salvus,’ had neither this, nor the verb ‘salvare;’ some, indeed, have thought that ‘salvare’ had always existed in the common speech. ‘Servator’ was instinctively felt to be insufficient, even as ‘Preserver’ would for us fall very short of uttering all which ‘Saviour’ does now. The seeking of the strayed, the recovery of the lost, the healing of the sick, would all be but feebly and faintly suggested by it, if suggested at all. God ‘*preserveth*’ man and beast,’ but He is the ‘Saviour’ of his own in a more inward and far higher sense. It was long before the Latin Christian writers extricated themselves from this em-

* Hoc [σωτήρ] quantum est? ita magnum ut Latine uno verbo exprimi non possit.

barrassment, for the 'Salutificator' of Tertullian, the 'Sospitator' of another, assuredly did not satisfy the need. The strong good sense of Augustine finally disposed of the difficulty. He made no scruple about using 'Salvator;' observing with a true insight into the law of the birth of words, that however 'Salvator' might not have been good Latin before the Saviour came, He by his coming had made it such; for, as shadows wait upon substances, so words wait upon things.* Take another example. It seemed so natural a thing, in the old heathen world, to expose infants, if it was not found convenient to rear them, the crime excited so

* *Serm.* 299. 6: Christus Jesus, id est Christus Salvator: hoc est enim Latine Jesus. Nec quærant grammatici quàm sit Latinum, sed Christiani, quàm verum. Salus enim Latinum nomen est; salvare et salvator non fuerunt hæc Latina, antequam veniret Salvator: quando ad Latinos venit, et hæc Latina fecit. Cf. *De Trin.* 13. 10: Quod verbum [salvator] Latina lingua antea non habebat, sed habere poterat; sicut potuit quando voluit. Other words which we owe to Christian Latin, probably to the Vulgate or to the earlier Latin translations, are these—'carnalis,' 'compassio,' 'deitas' (Augustine, *Civ. Dei*, 7. 1), 'incarnatio,' 'justificatio,' 'longanimitas,' 'passio,' 'prædestinatio,' 'regeneratio,' 'resipiscentia,' 'revelatio,' 'sanctificatio,' 'soliloquium,' 'sufficientia,' 'supererogatio,' 'tribulatio.' Many of these may seem barbarous to the Latin scholar, but there is hardly one of them which does not imply a new thought, or a new feeling, or the sense of a new relation of man to God or to his fellow-man.

little remark, was so little regarded as a crime at all, that it is nothing wonderful to learn that the word 'infanticidium' was first born in the bosom of the Christian Church. Tertullian is the first in whose writings it appears.

Yet it is not only when new truth, moral or spiritual, has thus to fit itself to the lips of men, that such enlargements of speech become necessary: but in each further unfolding of those seminal truths implanted in man at the first, in each new enlargement of his sphere of knowledge, outward or inward, lie the same necessities involved. The beginnings and progressive advances of moral philosophy in Greece,* the transplanting of the same to Rome, the rise of the scholastic, and then of the mystic, theology in the Middle Ages, the discoveries of modern science and natural philosophy, these each and all have been accompanied with corresponding extensions in the domain of language. Of the words to which each of these has in turn given birth many, it is true, have never passed beyond their own peculiar sphere, having remained purely technical, or scientific, or theological to the last; but many, too, have passed over from the laboratory, the school, and the cloister, into daily life, and have, with the ideas which they incorporate, become the common heritage of all. For however hard and repulsive a front any study or

* See Lobeck, *Phrynichus*, p. 350.

science may seem to present to the great body of those who are as laymen to it, there is yet inevitably such a detrition as this going forward in the case of each, and it would not be a little interesting for one who was furnished with the knowledge sufficient, to trace it in all.

Where the movement is a popular one, stirring the heart and mind of a people to its very depths, there these new words will be for the most part born out of their bosom, a free spontaneous birth, seldom or never capable of being referred to one man more than another, because they belong to all. Where, on the contrary, the movement is more strictly theological, or has for its sphere those regions of science and philosophy, where, as first pioneers and discoverers, only a few can bear their parts, there the additions and extensions will lack something of the freedom, the unconscious boldness, which mark the others. Their character will be more artificial, less spontaneous, although here also the creative genius of the single man, as there of the nation, will oftentimes set its mark; and many a single word will come forth, which will be the result of profound meditation, or of intuitive genius, or of both in happiest combination—many a word, which shall as a torch illuminate vast regions comparatively obscure before, and, it may be, cast its rays far into the yet unexplored darkness beyond; or which, summing up into itself all the acquisitions

in a particular direction of the past, shall be as a mighty vantage ground from which to advance to new conquests in those realms of mind or of nature, not as yet subdued to the intellect of man.

‘Cosmopolite’ has often now a shallow or even a mischievous use, and he who calls himself a ‘cosmopolite’ may mean nothing more than that he is *not* a patriot, that his native country does *not* possess his love. Yet he could not have been a common man who, before the preaching of the Gospel, launched this word upon the world, and claimed this title for himself. Nor was he; for Diogenes the Cynic, whose sayings are among the most notable in antiquity, was its author. Being demanded of what city or country he was, Diogenes answered that he was a ‘cosmopolite;’ in this word widening the range of men’s thoughts, bringing in not merely a word new to Greek ears, but a thought which, however commonplace and familiar to us now, was most novel and startling to those whom he addressed. I am far from saying that contempt for his citizenship in its narrower sense may not have mingled with this his challenge for himself of a citizenship wide as the world; but there was not the less a very remarkable reaching out here after truths which were not fully born into the world until He came, in whom all national differences and distinctions were done away.

As occupying somewhat of a middle place

between those more deliberate word-makers, and the people, whose words rather grow than are made, we must not omit him who is a *maker* by the very right of his name—I mean, the poet. That creative energy with which he is endowed, ‘the high-flying liberty of conceit proper to the poet,’ will not fail to manifest itself in this region as in others. Extending the domain of thought and feeling, he will scarcely fail to extend that also of language, which does not willingly lag behind. And the loftier his moods, the more of this maker he will be. The passion of such times, the all-fusing imagination, will at once suggest and justify audacities in speech, upon which in calmer moods he would not have ventured, or, if he ventured, would fail to carry others with him: for only the fluent metal runs easily into novel shapes and moulds. It is not merely that the old and the familiar will often become new in his hands; that he will give the stamp of allowance, as to him it will be free to do, to words, should he count them worthy, which hitherto have lived only on the lips of the multitude, or been confined to some single dialect and province; but he will enrich his native tongue with words unknown and non-existent before—non-existent, that is, save in their elements; for in the historic period of a language it is not permitted to any man to bring new roots into it, but only to work on already given materials; to evolve what is latent

therein, to combine what is apart, to recall what has fallen out of sight.

But to return to the more deliberate coining of words. New necessities have within the last few years called out several of these deliberate creations in our own language. The almost simultaneous discovery of such large abundance of gold in so many quarters of the world has led some nations so much to dread an enormous depreciation of it, that they have ceased to make it the standard of value—Holland, for instance, has so done—and it has been found convenient to invent a word, ‘to demonetize,’ to express this process of turning a precious metal from being the legal standard into a mere article of commerce. So, too, diplomacy has recently added more than one new word to our vocabulary. I suppose nobody ever heard of ‘extradition’ till within the last few years ; nor of ‘neutralization’ till in the peace which followed the Crimean War, in which the ‘neutralization’ of the Black Sea was one of the stipulations. ‘Secularization,’ let me observe by the way, owes its birth to the long negotiations which preceded the Treaty of Westphalia. Whenever it was found impossible to find elsewhere compensation for some powerful claimant, there was always some bishopric which might be seized and turned into a secular possession. Our manifold contact with the East, with the necessity which has thence arisen of representing oriental words by aid of altoge-

ther a different alphabet, and the discussions how this best may be done, have brought with them the need of possessing a word to describe the process, and 'transliteration' is the result.

We have long had 'assimilation' in our dictionaries; 'dissimilation' has as yet scarcely found its way into them, but it speedily will. It will appear first, if it has not already appeared, in our books on language.* I express myself with this confidence, because advances in philology have rendered it a matter of necessity that we should possess a word to designate a certain process, and no other word would designate it at all so well. There is a process of 'assimilation' going on very extensively in language; the organs of speech finding themselves helped by changing one letter for another which has just occurred, or will just occur in a word; thus we say not '*adfiance*' but '*affiance*,' not '*renown*,' as our ancestors did when '*renommée*' was first naturalized, but '*renown*;' we say too, though we do not write it, '*cubboard*' and not '*cupboard*.' At the same time there is another opposite process, where some letter would recur too often for euphony or ease in speaking, were the strict form of the word too closely held fast; and where consequently this letter is exchanged for some other, generally for some nearly allied;

* Pott (*Etym. Forsch.* vol. ii. p. 65) has introduced it into German.

thus 'cæruleus' was once 'cæluleus,' from cælum ; 'meridies' is for 'medidies,' or medius dies. So too the Italians prefer 'veleno' to 'veneno ;' the Germans 'kartoffel' to 'tartüffel,' the original name of the potato ; and we 'cinnamon' to 'cinnamom' (the earlier form) ; in 'turtle,' 'marble,' 'purple' we have shrunk from the double 'r' of 'turtur,' 'marmor,' 'purpura ;' and this process of *making unlike*, requiring a term to express it, will create, has indeed already created, the word 'dissimilation,' which will presently establish itself in far wider than its primary use.*

New necessities, new evolutions of society into more complex conditions, evoke new words ; which come forth, because they are required now ; but did not formerly exist, because they were not required in the period preceding. For example, in Greece so long as the poet sang his own verses, 'singer' (ἀοιδὸς) sufficiently expressed the double function ; such a 'singer' was Homer, and such Homer describes Demodocus, the bard of the Phæacians ; that double function, in fact, not being in his time contemplated as double, but each of its parts so naturally completing the other, that no second word was required. When, however, in the division of labour one made the verses which another chaunted, then 'poet' or 'maker,' a word unknown in the Homeric age,

* See Dwight, *Modern Philology*, 2nd Series, p. 100.

arose. In like manner, when 'physicians' were the only natural philosophers, the word covered this meaning as well as that other which it still retains; but when the investigation of nature and natural causes detached itself from the art of healing, became an independent study, the name 'physician' remained to that which was as the stock and stem of the art, while the new offshoot sought out a new name for itself.

But it is not merely new things which will require new names. It will often be discovered that old things have not got them. The manner in which men become aware of such deficiencies, is commonly this. Comparing their own language with another, and in some provinces at least a richer, perhaps being compelled to such a comparison through having undertaken to transfer some of the treasures of that language, of its philosophy or its poetry, into their own, they become conscious of much which it is worth while to utter in human speech, which is plainly utterable therein, since another language has found utterance for it, while yet in their own it has found no voice; and with more or less success they proceed to supply the deficiency. Except for such a comparison as this the absence of the needful terms would seldom dawn even on the most thoughtful; for language is to so large an extent the condition and limit of thought, men are so little accustomed, indeed so little able, to meditate on things, except through the intervention, and by the machinery, of words, that

nothing short of this would bring them to a sense of the actual existence of any such wants. Here is one advantage of acquaintance with other languages besides our own, and of the institution which will follow, if we have learned those other to any purpose, of these comparisons, namely, that we thus become aware that names are not, and least of all the names in any one language, co-extensive with things (and by 'things' I mean subjects as well as objects of thought, whatever one can *think* about), that innumerable things exist which, though capable of being resumed and connoted in a word, are yet without one, unnamed and unregistered; and thus, vast as is the world of names, that the world of realities is even vaster still. Such discoveries the Romans made, when they sought to transplant the moral philosophy of Greece to an Italian soil. They found that many of its terms had no equivalents in their own tongue; which equivalents therefore they proceeded to devise for themselves, appealing for this to the latent capabilities of their own tongue. For example, the Greek schools had a word, and one playing no unimportant part in some of their philosophical systems, to express 'apathy,' or the absence of all passion and pain. As it was absolutely necessary to possess a corresponding word, Cicero invented 'indolentia,' as that 'if I may so speak' with which he paves the way to his first introduction of it, manifestly declares.*

* *Fin.* 2. 4; and for 'qualitas' see *Acad.* 1. 6.

Sometimes, indeed, such a skilful mint-master of words, such a subtle watcher and weigher of their force * as was Cicero, will have noted even apart from this comparison with other languages, an omission in his own, which thereupon he will endeavour to supply. Thus the Latin had two adjectives which, though sometimes confusedly used, possessed each its peculiar meaning, 'invidus,' one who is envious, 'invidiosus,' one who excites envy in others; † at the same time there was only one substantive, 'invidia,' the correlative of them both; with the disadvantage, therefore, of being employed now in an active, now in a passive sense, now for the envy which men feel, and now for the envy which they excite. The word he saw was made to do double duty, and that under a seeming unity there lurked a real dualism, from which manifold confusions might follow. He therefore devised 'invidentia,' to express the active envy, or the envying, no doubt desiring that 'invidia' should be restrained to the passive, the being envied. 'Invidentia' to all appearance supplied a real want; yet he did not succeed in giving it currency; does not seem himself to have much cared to employ it again.‡

* Ille verborum vigilantissimus appensor ac mensor, as Augustine happily terms him.

† Thus the monkish line:

Invidiosus ego, non *invidus* esse laboro.

‡ *Tusc.* 3. 9; 4. 8; cf. Döderlein, *Synon.* vol. iii. p. 68.

We see by this example that not every word, which even a master of language proposes, finds acceptance;* for as Dryden speaking on this matter has said, 'It is one thing to draw a bill, and another to have it accepted.' Provided some live, he must be content that others should fall to the ground and die. Nor is this the only unsuccessful candidate for admission into the language which Cicero proposed. His 'indolentia,' which I mentioned just now, hardly passed beyond himself;† his 'vitiositas,'‡ 'indigentia,' and 'mulierositas,'§ not at all. 'Beatitas' too and 'beatitudo,'|| both of his coining, yet, as he owns himself, with something strange and uncouth about them, found but the faintest echo in the classical literature of Rome: 'beatitudo,' indeed, obtained a home, as it deserved to do, in the Christian Church, but 'beatitas' made no way whatsoever. Coleridge's 'esemplastic,' by which he was fain to express

* Quintilian's advice, based on this fact, is good (I. 6, 42): *Etiam si potest nihil peccare, qui utitur iis verbis quæ summi auctores tradiderunt, multum tamen refert non solum quid dixerint, sed etiam quid persuaserint.*

† Thus Seneca a little later is unaware, or has forgotten, that Cicero made any such suggestion. Taking no notice of it, he proposes 'impatientia' as an adequate rendering of ἀπάθεια. There clung this inconvenience to the word, as he himself allowed, that it was already used in exactly the opposite sense (*Ep.* 9). Elsewhere he claims to be the inventor of 'essentia' (*Ep.* 38).

‡ *Tusc.* 4. 15. § *Tusc.* 4. 11. || *Nat. Deor.* 1. 34.

the all-atoning or unifying power of the imagination, does not seem at all to have pleased others in the measure in which it pleased himself ; while the words of Jeremy Taylor, of such Latinists as Sir Thomas Browne and Henry More, words born only to die, are multitudinous as the leaves of autumn.* Still even the word which fails is often an honourable testimony to the scholarship, the accuracy of thought, the imagination of its proposer ; and Ben Jonson is overhard on 'neologists,' if I may bring this term back to its earlier meaning, when he says : 'A man coins not a new word without some peril, and less fruit ; for if it happen to be received, the praise is but moderate ; if refused, the scorn is assured.'

I spoke just now of comprehensive words, which should singly say what hitherto it had taken many words to say, in which a higher term has been reached than before had been found. The value of these is immense. By the cutting short of lengthy explanations and tedious circuits of language, they facilitate mental processes, which would often be nearly or quite impossible without them ; and those who have invented or put these into circulation, are benefactors of a high order to knowledge. In the ordinary traffic of life, unless our dealings are on the smallest scale, we willingly have about

* See my *English Past and Present*, 7th edit. p. 102.

us our money in the shape rather of silver than of copper; and if our transactions are at all extensive, rather in gold than in silver: while, if we were setting forth upon a long and costly journey, we should be best pleased to turn even our gold coin itself into bills of exchange or circular notes; in fact, into the highest denomination of money which it was capable of assuming. How many words with which we are now perfectly familiar are for us what the bill of exchange or circular note is for the traveller and the merchant. As in one of these last, innumerable pence, a multitude of shillings, not a few pounds are gathered up and represented, so have we in some single word the quintessence and final result of an infinite number of anterior mental processes, ascending one above the other, until all have been at length summed up for us in that single word. This last is like to nothing so much as to some mighty river, which does not bring its flood of waters to the sea, till many rills have been swallowed up in brooks, and brooks in streams, and streams in tributary rivers, each of these affluents having lost its separate name and existence in that which at once at last represents and is continent of them all.

Science is an immense gainer by words which thus say singly, what whole sentences would otherwise have scarcely said. Thus 'isothermal' is quite a modern invention; but how much is

summed up by the word ; what a long story is saved, as often as we speak of 'isothermal' lines. Physiologists have given the name of 'atavism' to the emerging again of a face in a family after its disappearance during two or three generations. What would have else needed a sentence is here accomplished by a word. When Aristotle, in the opening sentences of his *Rhetoric*, declares that rhetoric and logic are 'antistrophic,' what a wonderful insight into both, and above all into their relations to one another, does the word impart to those who have such special training as enables them to take in all which hereby he intends. Take a word so familiar as 'circle.' How much must have gone before, ere the word, with its corresponding idea, could have existed ; and then imagine how it would fare with us, if, as often as in some long and difficult mathematical problem we needed to refer to this figure, we were obliged to introduce its entire definition, no single word representing it ; and not this only, but the definition of each term employed in the definition ;—how wellnigh impossible it would prove to carry the whole process in the mind, or to take oversight of all its steps. Imagine a few more words struck out of the vocabulary of the mathematician, and if all activity and advance in his proper domain was not altogether arrested, yet would it be as effectually restrained and hampered as commercial intercourse would be, if in all its transactions iron or copper were the

sole medium of exchange. Wherever any science is progressive, there will be progress in its nomenclature as well. Words will keep pace with things, and with more or less felicity resuming in themselves the labours of the past, will at once assist and abridge the labours of the future ; like tools which, themselves the result of the finest mechanical skill, do at the same time render other and further triumphs of art possible, such as would have been quite unattainable without them.

It is not merely the widening of men's intellectual horizon, which, bringing new thoughts within the range of their vision, compels the origination of corresponding words ; but as often as regions of this outward world hitherto closed are laid open, the novel objects of interest which these contain will demand to find their names, and not merely to be catalogued in the nomenclature of science, but, so far as they present themselves to the popular eye, will require to be popularly named. When a new thing, a plant, or fruit, or animal, or whatever else it may be, is imported from some foreign land, or so comes within the sphere of knowledge that it needs to be thus named, there are various ways by which this may be done. The first and commonest way is to import the name and the thing together, incorporating the former, unchanged, or with slight modification, into the language. Thus we did with the potato, which is only

another form of 'batata,' in which shape the original Indian word appears in our earlier voyagers. But this is not the only way of naming; and the example on which I have just lighted affords good illustration of various other methods which may be adopted. Thus a name belonging to something else, which the new object nearly resembles, may be transferred to it, and the confusion arising from calling different things by the same name disregarded. It was thus in German, 'kartoffel' being only a corruption, which found place in the last century, of 'tartüffel,' properly the name of the truffle; but which not the less was transferred to the potato, on the ground of the many resemblances between them. Or again this same transfer may take place, but with some qualifying or distinguishing addition. This course the Italians took. They also called the potato 'tartufo,' but added 'bianco,' the white truffle; a name now giving way to 'patata.' Thus was it, too, with the French; who called it apple, but 'apple of the earth'; even as in many of the provincial dialects of Germany it bears the name of 'erdappel' or earth-apple at this day.

It will sometimes happen that a language, having thus to provide a new name for a new thing, will seem for a season not to have made up its mind by which of these methods it shall do it. Two names will exist side by side, and only after a time will one gain the upper hand

of the other. Thus when the pineapple was introduced into England it brought with it, probably from the East, the name of 'ananas' or 'anana,' under which last form it is celebrated by Thomson in his *Seasons*. This name has been nearly or quite put out of use by 'pineapple,' manifestly suggested by the likeness of the new fruit to the cone of the pine. It is not a very happy formation ; for it is not *likeness* but *identity* which 'pineapple' implies ; and it gives some excuse to an error, which up to a very late day ran through all German-English and French-English dictionaries (I know not whether it is even now removed) ; in all of these 'pineapple' is rendered as though it signified not the anana, but this cone of the pine ; and not very long ago, the *Journal des Débats*, the *Times* of France, made some uncomplimentary observations on the voracity of the English, who could wind up a Lord Mayor's dinner with fir-cones for dessert.

Sometimes the name adopted will be one drawn from an intermediate language, through which the knowledge first reached us of the object requiring to be named. 'Alligator' is an example of this ; an example, too, of the manner in which, at some periods in the life of a language, everything turns to good, so that misconceptions and errors, misshaping, and seeming to mar a word at its first formation, yet do not hinder it from forming a serviceable

portion of the after tongue. When the alligator, that ugly crocodile of the New World, was first seen by the Spanish discoverers, they called it, with a true insight into its species, 'el lagarto,' or *the* lizard, as being the largest of that lizard species to which it belonged, or indeed sometimes 'el lagarto de las Indias,' the Indian lizard. In Sir Walter Raleigh's *Discovery of Guiana*, the word still retains its Spanish form. Sailing up the Orinoco, 'We saw in it,' he says, 'divers sorts of strange fishes of marvellous bigness, but for *lagartos* it exceeded ; for there were thousands of these ugly serpents, and the people call it, for the abundance of them, the river of *lagartos*, in their language.' We can explain the shape which with us it gradually assumed, by supposing that English sailors who brought it home, and had continually heard, but may have never seen it written, blended, as in similar instances has often happened, the Spanish article 'el' with the name. In Ben Jonson's 'alligarta,' we see the word in the process of transformation. *

* 'Alcoran' supplies another example of this curious annexation of the article. Examples of a like absorption or incorporation of it are numerous in French. 'Lierre,' ivy, was written by Ronsard, 'l'hierre,' which is correct, being the Latin 'hedera.' 'Lingot' is our 'ingot,' but with fusion of the article ; in 'larigot' and 'loricot' the word and the article have in the same manner grown together. In old French it was 'l'endemain,' or, le jour en demain: 'le lendemain,' as now written, is a barbarous

Less honourable causes than some which I have mentioned, give birth to new words ; which will sometimes reflect back a very fearful light on the moral condition of that epoch in which first they saw the light. Of the Roman emperor, Tiberius, one of those ‘inventors of evil things,’ of whom St. Paul speaks (Rom. i. 30), Tacitus informs us that he caused words, unknown before, to emerge, in the Latin tongue, for the setting out of wickednesses, happily also previously unknown, which he had invented.

The atrocious attempt of Louis the Fourteenth to convert the Protestants in his dominions to the Roman Catholic faith by quartering dragoons upon them, with license to misuse to the uttermost those who refused to apostatize, this ‘booted mission’ (mission bottée), as it was facetiously called at the time, has bequeathed ‘dragonnade’ to the French language. ‘Refugee’ had at the same time its rise, and owed it to the same

excess of expression. ‘La Pouille,’ a name given to the southern extremity of Italy, and in which we recognize ‘Apulia,’ is another variety of error, but moving in the same sphere (Génin, *Récréations Philologiques*, vol. i. pp. 102–105); of the same variety is ‘La Natolie,’ which was written ‘L’Anatolie’ once. An Irish scholar has observed that in modern Irish ‘an’ (= ‘the’) is frequently thus absorbed in the names of places, as in ‘Nenagh,’ ‘Naul ;’ while sometimes an error exactly the reverse of this is committed, and a letter supposed to be the article, but in fact a part of the word, dropt : thus ‘Oughaval,’ instead of ‘Noughaval,’ or New Habitation.

event. They were called 'réfugiés' or 'refugees' who took refuge in some land less inhospitable than their own, so to escape the tender mercies of these missionaries. 'Convertisseur' belongs to the same period. The spiritual factor was so named who undertook to convert the Protestants on a large scale, receiving so much a head for the converts that he made.

Our use of 'roué' throws light upon a curious and shameful page of history. The 'roué,' a man now of profligate character and conduct, was properly and primarily one broken on the wheel. Its present and secondary meaning it derived from that Duke of Orleans who was Regent of France after the death of Louis the Fourteenth. It was his miserable pride to gather round him companions if possible worse and wickeder than himself. These, as St. Simon assures us, he was wont to call his 'roués;' every one of them abundantly deserving to be broken on the wheel,—which was the punishment then reserved in France for the worst malefactors.* When we have learned the pedigree of the word, the man and the age rise up before us, glorying in their shame, and not caring to pay to virtue even that hypocritical homage which vice finds it sometimes convenient to render.

* The 'roués' themselves, as St. Simon assures us, declared that the word expressed rather their readiness to give any proof of their affection, even to the being broken upon the wheel, to their protector and friend.

The great French Revolution has made, as might be expected, characteristic contributions to the French language. It gives us some insight into its ugliest side to know that, among other words, it produced the following: 'sans-culotte,' 'incivisme,' 'terrorisme,' 'noyade,' 'guillotine,' 'lanterner.' Still later, the French conquests in North Africa, and the pitiless severities with which every attempt at resistance on the part of the free tribes of the interior has been put down and punished, have left their mark upon the language. 'Razzia' has been added to it, and expresses the swift and sudden sweeping away of a tribe, its herds, its crops, and all that belongs to it. The Communist insurrection of 1871 has left 'pétroleuse' as its contribution to the language.

But it would ill become us to look only abroad for examples, when perhaps an equal abundance might be found much nearer home. Words of our own keep record of passages in our history in which we have little reason to glory. Thus 'mob' and 'sham' had their birth in that most disgraceful period of English history, the interval between the Restoration and Revolution. 'I may note,' says one writing towards the end of the reign of Charles the Second, 'that the rabble first changed their title, and were called "the mob" in the assemblies of this [The Green Ribbon] Club. It was their beast of burden, and called first "mobile vulgus," but fell naturally into the contraction of

one syllable, and ever since is become proper English.* Yet much later a writer in *The Spectator* speaks of 'mob' as still only struggling into existence. 'I dare not answer,' he says, 'that mob, rap, pos, incog., and the like, will not in time be looked at as part of our tongue.' In regard of 'mob,' the mobile multitude, swayed hither and thither by each gust of passion or caprice, this, which *The Spectator* hardly expected, while he confessed it possible, has actually taken place. 'It is one of the many words formerly slang, which are now used by our best writers, and received, like pardoned outlaws, into the body of respectable citizens.' Again, though the murdering of poor helpless lodgers, afterwards to sell their bodies for dissection, can only be regarded as the monstrous wickedness of one or two, yet the verb 'to burke,' drawn from the name of a wretch who long pursued this hideous traffic, will be evidence to all after times, unless indeed its origin should be forgotten, to how strange a crime this age of a boasted civilization could give birth.

We must not count as new words properly so called, although they may delay us for a minute,

* North, *Examen*, p. 574; for the origin of 'sham' see p. 231. Compare Swift in *The Tatler*, ccxxx. 1710: 'I have done the utmost,' he there says, 'for some years past to stop the progress of "mob" and "banter;" but have been plainly borne down by numbers, and betrayed by those who promised to assist me.'

those comic words, most often comic combinations formed at will, in which, as plays and displays of power, writers ancient and modern have delighted. These for the most part are meant to do service for the moment and then to pass away. The inventors of them themselves had no intention of fastening them permanently on the language. Thus, among other words, Aristophanes coined *μελλονικιάω*, to loiter like Nicias, with allusion to the delays with which this prudent commander sought to put off the disastrous Sicilian expedition, with not a few others, familiar to every scholar. The humour will sometimes consist in their enormous length,* sometimes in their mingled observance and transgression of the laws of the language, as in the *δαναώτατος* of the Greek comic poet, the 'patruissimus' and 'oculissimus,' comic superlatives of patruus and oculus, 'occisissimus' of occisus; 'dominissimus' of dominus; 'asinissimo' (Italian) of asino; as in the 'dosones,' 'dabones,' which in Greek and in medieval Latin were names given to those who were ever promising, ever saying 'I will give,' but never following up promise with performance. Plautus, with his exuberant wit, and exulting in his mastery of the Latin language, is rich in these, 'fustitudinus,' 'ferricreprinus' and the like; will put together four or five lines consisting

* As in the *ἀμφιπτολεμοπηδησίστρατος* of Eupolis; the *σπερμαγοραιολεκιεολαχανοπῶλις* of Aristophanes.

wholly of comic combinations thrown off for the occasion.* Of the same character is Chaucer's 'octogamy,' or eighth marriage; Butler's 'cynarctomachy,' or battle of a dog and bear. Fuller, when he used 'to avunculize,' to follow in the steps of one's uncle, did not propose it as a lasting addition to the language; Cowper his 'extraforaneous' and such like as little.

Such are some of the sources of increase in the wealth of a language; some of the quarters from which its vocabulary is augmented. There have been, from time to time, those who have so little understood what a language is, and what are the laws which it obeys, that they have sought by arbitrary decrees of their own to arrest its growth, have pronounced that it has attained to the limits of its growth, and must not henceforward presume to develop itself further. But a language has a life, just as really as a man, or as a tree. As a man, it must grow to its full stature; even as it is also submitted to his conditions of decay. As a forest tree, it will defy any feeble bands which should attempt to control its expansion, so long as the principle of growth is in it; as a tree too it will continually, while it casts off some leaves, be putting forth others. And thus all these attempts have utterly failed, even when made

* *Persa*, iv. 6, 20-23.

under conditions the most favourable for success. The French Academy, containing all or nearly all the most distinguished literary men of France, once sought to exercise such a domination over their own language, and, if any could succeed, they might have hoped to do so. But the language heeded their decrees as little as the advancing tide did those of Canute. Could they hope to keep out of men's speech, or even out of their books, however they kept out of their own *Dictionary*, such words as 'blague,' 'blagueur,' 'blaguer,' because, being born of the people, they had the people's mark upon them? After fruitless resistance for a time, they have in cases innumerable been compelled to give way—though in favour of the words just cited they have not done so—and in each successive edition of their *Dictionary* to throw open its doors to words which had established themselves in the language, and would hold their ground there, altogether indifferent whether they received the Academy's seal of allowance or not.*

* Nisard (*Curiosités de l'Étym. Franç.* p. 195) has an article on these words. 'Je regrette,' he says, with the epigrammatic neatness of French prose, 'que l'Académie repousse de son Dictionnaire les mots *blague*, *blagueur*, laissant gronder à sa porte ces fils effrontés du peuple, qui finiront par l'enforcer.' On the same matter of the futility of fighting against popular usage in language, Montaigne has said, 'They that will fight custom with

A French scholar who single-handed is giving to the world a far better Dictionary than that of the Academy, has shown a much juster appreciation of the actual facts of language. If there was a word born in the streets, and bearing about it the tokens of its birthplace, it is 'gamin ;' moreover it cannot be traced farther back than the year 1835 ; then first it appeared in a book, though it may have lived some while before on the lips of the people ; but already it has found a place in the pages of Littré's *Dictionary*. So has 'flâneur,' so no doubt will 'rococo,' with many more, having the same marks on them of a popular origin as these have. And with good right ; for though fashions may descend from the upper classes to the lower, words, such I mean as constitute the most real additions to the wealth of a language, ascend from the lower to the higher ; and of these not a few, however the fastidious may oppose or ignore them for awhile, will assert a place for themselves therein, from which they will not be driven by the protests of all the scholars and all the academicians in the world.

Those who make attempts of this kind strangely forget the steps whereby that vocabulary of the language, with which they are

grammar are fools ;' and, we may add, not less fools, as engaged in as hopeless a conflict, they that will fight it with dictionary.

so entirely satisfied that they resent every endeavour to enlarge it, had itself been gotten together—namely by that very process which they are now seeking by an arbitrary decree to arrest. We so take for granted that words with which we have been always familiar, whose right to a place in the language no one dreams now of challenging or disputing, have always formed part of it, that it is oftentimes a surprise to discover of how very late introduction some of these actually are ; what an amount of remonstrance and resistance, it may be, they encountered at the first. To take two or three Latin examples : Cicero, in employing ‘favor,’ a word in a little while after used by everybody, does it with an apology, seems to feel that he is introducing a questionable novelty ; ‘urbanus,’ too, in our sense of urbane, had in his time only just come up ; ‘obsequium’ he believes Terence to have been the first to employ.* ‘Soliloquium’ seems to us so natural, indeed so necessary, a word, this ‘soliloquy,’ or talking of a man with himself alone, something which would so inevitably seek out its adequate expression, that we learn with surprise that no one spoke of a ‘soliloquy’ before Augustine ; the word having been invented, as he distinctly informs us, by himself.†

* On the new words in classical Latin, see Quintilian, *Inst.* viii. 3. 30-37.

† *Solil.* 2. 7.

When a word has proved an unquestionable gain, it is interesting to watch it as it first comes forth, timid, and doubtful of the reception it will meet with ; and the interest is much enhanced if it thus come forth on some memorable occasion, or from some memorable man. Both these interests meet in the word 'essay.' If it were demanded what is the most remarkable volume of essays which the world has seen, few, having sufficient oversight of the field of literature to be capable of replying, would fail to answer, Lord Bacon's. But they were also the first which bore that name ; for we gather from the following passage in the (intended) dedication of the volume to Prince Henry, that 'essay' was itself a recent word in the language, and in the use to which he put it, perfectly novel : he says—' To write just treatises requireth leisure in the writer, and leisure in the reader ; . . which is the cause which hath made me choose to write certain brief notes set down rather significantly than curiously, which I have called *Essays*. The word is late, but the thing is ancient.' From this dedication we gather that, little as 'essays' now can be considered a word of modesty, deprecating too large expectations on the part of the reader, it had, as 'sketches' perhaps would have now, as 'commentary' had in the Latin, that intention in its earliest use. In this deprecation of higher pretensions it resembled the 'philosopher' of Pythagoras. Others had styled

themselves, or had been willing to be styled 'wise men.' 'Lover of wisdom,' a name at once so modest and so beautiful, was of his devising.*

But while thus there are words which surprise us that they are so new, others surprise us that they are so old. Few, I should imagine, are aware that 'rationalist,' and this in a theological, and not merely a philosophical sense, is of such early date as it is ; or that we have not imported quite in these later times both the name and the thing from Germany. Yet this is very far from the case. There were 'rationalists' in the time of the Commonwealth ; and these challenging the name exactly on the same grounds as those who in later times have claimed it for their own. Thus, the author of a newsletter from London† among other things mentions : 'There is a new sect sprung up among them [the Presbyterians and Independents], and these are the *Rationalists*, and what their reason dictates them in Church or State stands for good, until they be convinced with better ;' with more to the same effect. 'Christology' has been lately characterized as a monstrous importation from Germany. I am quite of one mind with the remonstrant that English theology does not need, and can do excellently well without it ; yet this novelty it is not ; for in the *Preface*

* Diogenes Laërtius, *Proæm.* § 12.

† With date, Oct. 14, 1646 ; in *The Clarendon State Papers*, vol. ii. p. 40 of the *Appendix*.

to the works of that illustrious Arminian divine of the seventeenth century, Thomas Jackson, written by Benjamin Oley, his friend and pupil, the following passage occurs: 'The reader will find in this author an eminent excellence in that part of divinity which I make bold to call *Christology*, in displaying the great mystery of godliness, God the Son manifested in human flesh.'*

In their power of taking up foreign words into healthy circulation and making them truly their own, languages differ much from one another, and the same language from itself at different periods of its life. There are languages of which the appetite and digestive power, the assimilative energy, is at some periods almost unlimited. Nothing is too hard for them; they will shape and mould to their own uses and habits almost any material offered to them. This, however, is in their youth; as age advances, the assimilative energy diminishes. Words are still adopted; for this process of adoption can never wholly cease: but a chemical amalgamation of the new with the old does not any longer find place; or only in some instances, and very partially even in them. They lie upon the surface of the language; their sharp corners are not worn or rounded off; they remain foreign still in their aspect and outline, and, having missed

* *Preface to Dr. Jackson's Works*, vol. i. p. xxvii. A work of Fleming's published in 1700, bears the title, *Christology*.

their opportunity of becoming otherwise, will remain so to the end. Those who adopt, as with an inward misgiving about their own gift and power of stamping them afresh, make a conscience of keeping them in exactly the same form in which they have received them ; instead of conforming them to the laws of that new community into which they are now received. Nothing will illustrate this so well as a comparison of different words of the same family, which have at different periods been introduced into our language. We shall find that those of an earlier introduction have become English through and through, while the later introduced, belonging to the same group, have been very far from undergoing the same transforming process. Thus 'bishop,' a word as old as the introduction of Christianity into England, though not hiding its descent from 'episcopus,' is thoroughly English ; while 'episcopal,' which has supplanted 'bishoply,' is only a Latin word in an English dress. 'Alms,' too, is genuine English, and English which has descended to us from far ; the very shape in which we have the word, one syllable for 'eleëmosyna' of six, sufficiently testifying this ; 'letters,' as Horne Tooke observes, 'like soldiers, being apt to desert and drop off in a long march.' The seven-syllabled and awkward 'eleëmosynary' is of far more recent date. Or sometimes this comparison is still more striking, when it is not merely words

of the same family, but the very same word which has been twice adopted, at an earlier period and a later—the earlier form will be truly English, as ‘palsy;’ the later will be only a Greek or Latin word spelt with English letters, as ‘paralysis.’ ‘Dropsy,’ ‘quinsy,’ ‘megrin,’ ‘squirrel,’ ‘rickets,’ ‘surgeon,’ ‘tansy,’ ‘dittany,’ ‘daffodil,’ and many more words that one might name, have nothing of strangers or foreigners about them, have made themselves quite at home in English. So entirely is their physiognomy native, that it would be difficult even to suspect them to be of Greek descent, as they all are. Nor has ‘kickshaws’ anything about it now which would compel us at once to recognize in it the French ‘quelques choses’ *—‘French *kickshose*,’ as with allusion to the quarter from which it came, and while the memory of that was yet fresh in men’s minds, it was often called by our early writers.

A very notable fact about new words, and a very signal testimony of their birth from the bosom of the people, is the difficulty which is so often found in tracing their pedigree. When the *causæ vocum* are sought, as they very fitly are, and out of much more than mere curiosity, for the

* ‘These cooks have persuaded us their coarse fare is the best, and all other but what they dress to be mere *quelques choses*, made dishes of no nourishing’ (Whitlock, *Zootomia*, p. 147).

causæ rerum are very often wrapt up in them, those continually elude research; and it fares thus not merely with words to which attention has not been called, nor interest about their etymology excited, till long after they had been in popular use—for that words of a remote antiquity should often puzzle and perplex us, should give scope to idle guesses, or altogether defy conjecture, this is nothing strange—but even where an investigation of their origin has been undertaken almost as soon as they have come into existence. Their rise is mysterious; like almost all acts of *becoming*, it is veiled in deepest obscurity. They emerge, they are in everybody's mouth; but yet, when it is inquired from whence they are, nobody can tell. They are but of yesterday, and yet with inexplicable rapidity they have already lost all trace of the circumstances of their birth.

This quickness with which words let go the secret of their origin is nowhere more striking than in the names of political or religious parties, and above all in the names of slight or of contempt. Thus Baxter tells us, in the *Narrative of his Life and Times*, that there already existed two explanations of 'Roundhead,'* a word not

* 'The original of which name is not certainly known. Some say it was because the Puritans then commonly wore short hair, and the king's party long hair; some say, it was because the Queen at Strafford's trial asked

nearly so old as himself. How much has been written about the origin of the German 'Ketzer,' or heretic, which is still in debate, though there can scarcely be a doubt that we have the Cathari here; hardly less about the French 'Cagot,' which however is pretty certainly '*canis Gothicus*,' this virtually excommunicated race being a real or supposed remnant among the Pyrenees of the refugee Gothic population of Spain. Is 'Lollard,' or 'Loller' as we read it in Chaucer, from 'lollen,' to chaunt? that is, does it mean the chaunting or canting people? or had the Lollards their title from a principal person among them of this name, who suffered at the stake?—to say nothing of the 'lolium' which some find in the name, these men being as *tares* among the wholesome wheat. The origin of 'Huguenot,' as applied to the French Protestants, was already a matter of doubt and discussion in the lifetime of those who first bore it. A German scholar has lately enumerated fifteen explanations which have been offered of the word.* As little does any one certainly know whence the Chouans, the insurgent royalists of Brittany, obtained their name. Were the 'Waldenses' so called from one Waldus, to whom these 'Poor Men of Lyons,' as they were

who that *round-headed* man was, meaning Mr. Pym, because he spake so strongly' (p. 34.)

* Mahn, *Etymol. Untersuch.*, p. 92.

at first called, owed their origin? or are they those living in *valle densâ*? or should the word be more properly Vallenses, the men of the Alpine valleys, the Dalesmen?—a question the certain determination of which would go far to settle the most difficult and disputed points in the history of these witnesses for scriptural truth. How much, again, might be said for the different derivations of ‘Hottentot.’ It is still in debate whether the word is itself African or Dutch.* Why are gypsies ‘zigeuner’ in German? When the word is resolved into ‘zieh-gauner,’ or roaming thieves, the explanation, however ingenious, has about as much scientific value as the not less ingenious explanation of ‘Saturnus’ as *satur annis* (Augustine), of ‘severitas’ as *sæva veritas* (the same), of ‘cadaver’ as made up of the first syllables of *caro data vermibus*.

One might anticipate that a name like ‘Canada,’ given, and within fresh historic times, to a vast territory, could be accounted for; but it can not; so too that our American kinsmen could give some account of ‘caucus,’ which plays so prominent a part in their elections, but they cannot.†

* See the *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 1866, pp. 6–25.

† It is probably a corruption of ‘caulkers,’ being derived from an association of these at Boston, who were active in preparing resistance to England in the period immediately preceding the War of Independence. The

‘Cannibal’ as a designation of man-eating savages, came first into use with the great discoveries in the western world of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries ; no certain explanation of it has yet been offered.* The Romans, one might imagine, would have given some satisfactory reason for their calling a subject region a ‘province ;’ unfortunately, they are able to give half a dozen reasons. Who can tell us with any certainty why the ‘catacombs’ were so called ? or whence the ‘Louvre’ had its name ? Strange again that the Church should have lost the secret of ‘Whitsunday’ ; † of her Collects, why they are so called ? ‡ or, with all that we

thing corresponds now very nearly to the Latin ‘sodalium.’

* Humboldt has made it probable that ‘canibal’ (it is spelt with a single *n* in all our early English), is a Latin corruption of ‘Caribales,’ a form under which Columbus designates the Caribs (propter rabiem *caninam* anthropophagorum gentis) ; as in French, ‘appétit de *chien*.’

† The medieval derivation was different from that which is generally current now, and has more to recommend it. Thus an early English poet:—

‘This day *Witsonday* is cald,
For wisdom and *wit* sevenfold
Was goven to the apostles on this day ;
For wise in alle thingis wer they ;
To speke with-uten mannes lore
Maner langage everi wher.’

‡ See Freeman, *Principles of Divine Science*, vol. i. p. 145.

know now of the Middle Ages, that we do not know certainly the derivation of 'fief' and 'feudal.' 'Morganatic' marriages are recognised by the public law of Germany; but the question of the word's etymology is unsettled still. As little can any one tell us why the Roman military standard on which Constantine inscribed the symbols of the Christian faith should have been called 'Labarum.' And yet the enquiry began early. A father of the Greek Church, almost a contemporary of Constantine, can do no more than suggest that 'labarum' is equivalent to 'laborum,' and that it was so called because in that victorious standard was the end of *labour* and toil (*finis laborum*)!* The 'ciborium' of the early Church is an equal perplexity;† and 'chapel' (*capella*) no less. All recent discussion has failed to dissipate the mystery of the 'Sangraal.'

But take now a word which has *not* lost the secret of its origin, in proof how easily it might lose this, and having once so done, how unlikely it would be that any searching would ever recover it. Burton tells us that the coarse cloth which is the medium of exchange in Eastern Africa, is called 'merkani.' The word is a native corrup-

* Mahn, *Etym. Untersuch.* p. 65; cf. Kurtz, *Kirchengeschichte*, 3rd edit. p. 115.

† The word is first met in Chrysostom, who calls the silver models of the temple at Ephesus (Acts xix. 24) *μικρὰ κιβώρια*.

tion of 'American,' the cloth being manufactured in America and sold under this name. But suppose a change should take place in the country from which this cloth was brought, and it came little by little to be forgotten that it ever had been imported from America, who would then divine the secret of the word? Or, again, if the tradition of the etymology of 'paraffin' were once lost, it would, I imagine, be lost for ever. It is little likely that any mere ingenuity would divine the fact that a certain oil was so named because 'parum affinis,' having little affinity which chemistry could detect, with any other substance. So, too, the derivation of 'licorice,' once let go, would scarcely be recovered. It would exist, at the best, but as one guess among many.

Those which I cited are but a handful of examples of the way in which words forget, or under pre-disposing conditions might forget, the circumstances of their birth. Now if we could believe in any merely *arbitrary* words, standing in connexion with nothing but the mere lawless caprice of some inventor, the impossibility of tracing their derivation would be nothing strange. Indeed it would be lost labour to seek for the parentage of all words, when many probably had none. But there is no such thing; there is no word which is not, as the Spanish gentleman loves to call himself, an 'hidalgo,' or son of something; if indeed this explanation of

‘hidalgo’ may stand. All are embodiments, more or less successful, of a sensation, a thought, or a fact; or if of more fortuitous birth, still they attach themselves somewhere to the already subsisting world of words and things, and have their point of contact with it and departure from it, not always discoverable, as we see, but yet always existing.* And thus, when a word entirely refuses to give up the secret of its origin, it can be regarded in no other light but as a riddle which no one has succeeded in solving, a lock of which no man has found the key—but still a riddle which has a solution, a lock for which there is a key, though now, it may be, irrecoverably lost. And this difficulty—it is often-times an impossibility—of tracing the genealogy even of words of a very recent formation, is, as I observed, an evidence of the birth of the most notable of these out of the heart and from the lips of the people. Had they first appeared in books, something in the context would most probably explain them. Had they issued from the schools of the learned, these would not have failed to leave a recognizable stamp and mark upon them.

There is, indeed, another way in which obscu-

* Some will remember here the old Greek dispute, whether words were *θέσει* or *φύσει*. It is needless to say that the last is the truth. See some excellent remarks on this subject by Rénan, *De l'Origine du Langage*, pp. 146-149.

rity may rest on a new word, or a word employed in a new sense ; so that, while it offers no difficulty at all in its etymology, it may for all this offer difficulties in the application of that etymology almost or quite impossible to solve. It may tell the story of its birth, of the word or words which compose it, may so bear these on its front, that there can be no question here, and yet the purpose and intention of the word may be hopelessly hidden from our eyes. The secret having been once lost, is not again to be recovered. Thus no one has called, or could call, in question the derivation of 'apocryphal,' that it means hidden away. When, however, we begin to enquire why certain books which the Church either set below the canonical Scriptures, or rejected altogether, were called 'apocryphal,' then a long and doubtful discussion commences. Was it because their origin was *hidden* to the early Fathers of the Church, and thus reasonable suspicions of their authenticity entertained ?* or because they were mysteriously kept out of sight and *hidden* by the heretical sects which boasted themselves in their exclusive possession ? or was it that they were books not laid up in the Church chest, but *hidden away* in obscure corners ? or were they books *worthier to be hidden* than to be

* Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, 15. 23): Apocrypha nuncupantur eo quod eorum occulta origo non claruit Patribus. Cf. *Con. Faust.* 11. 2.

brought forward and read to the faithful?—for all these explanations have been offered, and none with such superiority of proof on its side as to have deprived the others of all right to be heard. In the same way there is no question that ‘tragedy’ is the song of the goat; but why this, whether because a goat was the prize for the best performers of that song in which the germs of Greek tragedy lay; or because the first actors were dressed like satyrs in goatskins, is a question which will now remain unsettled to the end.* ‘Leonine’ verses have plainly to do with ‘leo’ in some shape or other; but are they so called from one Leo or Leolinus, who first composed hexameters with this internal rhyme? or because, as the lion is king of beasts, so this, in the monkish estimation, was the king of metres? No one can certainly say. That frightful system of fagging which reigned during the seventeenth century in the German universities, and which was known by the name of ‘pennalism,’ we can scarcely disconnect from ‘penna;’ while yet this does not bring us to any effectual scattering of the mystery which rests upon the word. The connexion of ‘dictator’ with ‘dicere,’ ‘dictare,’ is manifest; not so the reason why he obtained this name. ‘Sycophant’ and ‘superstition’ are words, one Greek and one Latin, of the same character. No one can doubt of what

* See Bentley, *Works*, vol. i. p. 337.

elements they are composed, and yet their secret has been so lost, that except as a more or less plausible guess it can never be recovered.*

But I must conclude. I may seem in this present lecture a little to have outrun your needs, and to have sometimes moved in a sphere too remote from that in which your future work will lie. And yet it is in truth very difficult to affirm of any words, that they do not touch us, do not in some way bear upon our studies, on that which we shall hereafter have to teach, or shall desire to learn ; that there are any conquests which language makes that concern only a few, and may be regarded indifferently by all others. For it is here as with many inventions in the arts and luxuries of life ; which, being at the first the exclusive privilege and possession of the wealthy and refined, gradually descend into lower strata of society, until at length what were once the elegancies and luxuries of a few, have become the decencies, well-nigh the necessities, of all. Not otherwise there are words, once only on the lips of philosophers or theologians, of the deeper thinkers of their time, or of those interested in their speculations, which step by step have come down, not debasing themselves in this act of becoming popular, but training and elevating an

* For a good recapitulation of all which has been written on 'superstitio,' see Pott, *Etym. Forschungen*, 2nd ed. vol. ii. p. 921.

ever-increasing number to enter into their meaning, till at length they have become truly a part of the nation's common stock, 'household words,' used easily and intelligently by all.

I cannot better conclude this lecture than by quoting a passage, one among many, which expresses with a rare eloquence all I have been labouring to utter; for this truth, which many have noticed, hardly any has set forth with the same fulness of illustration, or the same sense of its importance, as the author of *The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*. 'Language,' he observes, 'is often called an instrument of thought, but it is also the nutriment of thought; or rather, it is the atmosphere in which thought lives; a medium essential to the activity of our speculative powers, although invisible and imperceptible in its operation; and an element modifying, by its qualities and changes, the growth and complexion of the faculties which it feeds. In this way the influence of preceding discoveries upon subsequent ones, of the past upon the present, is most penetrating and universal, although most subtle and difficult to trace. The most familiar words and phrases are connected by imperceptible ties with the reasonings and discoveries of former men and distant times. Their knowledge is an inseparable part of ours; the present generation inherits and uses the scientific wealth of all the past. And this is the fortune, not only of the great and

rich in the intellectual world, of those who have the key to the ancient storehouses, and who have accumulated treasures of their own, but the humblest inquirer, while he puts his reasonings into words, benefits by the labours of the greatest. When he counts his little wealth, he finds he has in his hands coins which bear the image and superscription of ancient and modern intellectual dynasties, and that in virtue of this possession acquisitions are in his power, solid knowledge within his reach, which none could ever have attained to if it were not that the gold of truth once dug out of the mine circulates more and more widely among mankind.'

LECTURE VI.

ON THE DISTINCTION OF WORDS.

SYNONYMS, and the study of synonyms, with the advantages to be derived from a careful noting of the distinction between them, is the subject to which my present lecture invites you. But what, you may ask, is meant, when, comparing certain words with one another, we affirm of them that they are synonyms? We imply that, with great and essential resemblances of meaning, they have at the same time small, subordinate, and partial differences—these differences being such as either originally, and on the ground of their etymology, inhered in them; or differences which they have by usage acquired; or such as, though nearly or altogether latent now, they are capable of receiving at the hands of wise and discreet masters of the tongue. Synonyms are words of like significance in the main, but with a certain unlikeness as well; with very much in common, but also with something private and particular, which they do not share with one another.*

* The word 'synonym' only found its way into the

So soon as the term is defined thus, it will be at once perceived by any acquainted with the etymology, that, strictly speaking, it is a misnomer, and is given, with a certain inaccuracy and impropriety, to words which fulfil these conditions in respect of one another ; since in strictness of speech the terms, 'synonyms' and 'synonymous,' applied to words, affirm of them that they cover not merely almost, but altogether the same extent of meaning, that they are in their signification perfectly identical and coincident ; circles, so to speak, with the same centre and the same circumference. The terms, however, are not ordinarily so used ; they evidently are not so by such as undertake to trace out the distinction between synonyms ; for, without venturing to deny that there may be such perfect synonyms, words, that is, with this absolute coincidence, yet these could not be the objects of any such discrimination ; since, where no real distinction exists, it would be lost labour and the exercise of a perverse ingenuity to attempt to draw one out.

There are, indeed, those who affirm that words

English language about the middle of the seventeenth century. Its incoming is marked by the Greek or Latin termination which for a while it bore ; Jeremy Taylor writing 'synonymon,' Hacket 'synonymum,' and Milton (in the plural) 'synonyma.' On the subject of this chapter see Marsh, *Lectures on the English Language*, New York, 1860, p. 571, sqq.

in one language are never exactly synonymous, in all respects commensurate, with words in another ; that, when they are compared with one another, there is always something more, or something less, or something different, which hinders this complete identity. And, those words being excepted which designate objects in their nature absolutely incapable of a more or less and of every qualitative difference, I should be disposed to consider other exceptions to this assertion exceedingly rare. For what, after all, is a word, but the enclosure of a certain district, larger or smaller, from the vast outfield of thought or fact, and in this a bringing of it into human cultivation, a rescuing of it for human uses? But how extremely unlikely it is that nations, drawing altogether independently of one another these lines of enclosure, should draw them in all or most cases exactly in the same direction, neither narrower nor wider ; how inevitable, on the contrary, that very often the lines should not coincide—and this, even supposing no moral forces at work to disturb the falling of the lines. How immense and instructive a field of comparison between languages does this fact lay open to us ; while it is sufficient to drive a translator with a high ideal of the task which he has undertaken well-nigh to despair.

But it is not words in different languages, but words in one and the same, of which we are speaking here.

Synonyms then, as the term is generally understood, and as I shall use it here, are words in the same language with slight differences already established between them, or potentially subsisting in them. They are not on the one side words absolutely identical ; but neither on the other side only remotely related to one another ; for the differences between these last will be self-evident, will so lie on the surface and proclaim themselves to all, that it would be as superfluous an office as holding a candle to the sun to attempt to make this clearer than it already is. It may be desirable to trace and fix the difference between scarlet and crimson, for these might easily be confounded ; but who would think of so doing between scarlet and green ? They must be words which are more or less liable to confusion, but which yet ought not to be confounded ; as one has said, ‘*quæ conjungi, non confundi, debent* ;’ in which there originally inhered a difference, or between which, though once absolutely identical, such has gradually grown up, and so established itself in the use of the best writers, and in the instinct of the best speakers of the tongue, that it claims to be openly acknowledged by all.

But here an interesting question presents itself to us : How do languages come to possess synonyms of this latter class, which are differentiated not by etymology nor by any other deep-lying cause, but only by usage ? Now if

languages had been made by agreement, of course no such synonyms as these could exist ; for when once a word had been found which was the adequate representative of a thought, feeling, or fact, no second one would have been sought. But languages are the result of processes very different from, and far less formal and regular than, this. Various tribes, each with its own dialect, kindred indeed, but in many respects distinct, coalesce into one people, and cast their contributions of language into a common stock. Thus the French possesses many synonyms from the *langue d'Oc* and *langue d'Oil*, each having contributed its word for one and the same thing, as 'âtre' and 'foyer,' both for hearth. Sometimes different tribes of the same people have the same word, but in forms sufficiently different to cause that both remain, but as words distinct from one another ; thus in Latin 'serpo' and 'repo' are dialectic variations of the same word ; 'puteo' and 'foeteo' are the same ; just as in German, 'odem' and 'athem' were only dialectic differences at the first. Or again, a conquering people have fixed themselves in the midst of a conquered ; they impose their dominion, but do not succeed in imposing their language ; nay, being few in number they find themselves at last compelled to adopt the language of the conquered ; or after a while that which may be called a transaction, a compromise between the two languages, finds place.

One carries the day, but on the condition that it shall admit as naturalized denizens a vast number of the words of the other.

These are causes of the existence of synonyms which reach far back into the history of a nation and a language ; but other causes at a later period are also at work. When a written literature springs up, authors familiar with various foreign tongues import from one and another words which are not absolutely required, which are oftentimes rather luxuries than necessities. Sometimes, having a very sufficient word of their own, they must needs go and look for a finer one, as they esteem it, from abroad ; as, for instance, the Latin having its own expressive ‘succinum’ (from ‘succus’), for amber, some must import from the Greek the ambiguous ‘electrum.’ Of these thus proposed as candidates for admission, some fail to obtain the rights of citizenship, and after longer or shorter probation are rejected ; it may be, never advance beyond their first proposer. Enough, however, receive the stamp of popular allowance to create embarrassment for a while, until, that is, their relations with the already existing words are adjusted. As a single illustration of the various quarters from which the English has thus been augmented and enriched, I would instance the words ‘trick,’ ‘device,’ ‘finesse,’ ‘artifice,’ and ‘stratagem,’ and enumerate the various sources from which we have drawn them. Here ‘trick’ is Saxon,

‘*devisa*’ is Italian, ‘*finesse*’ is French, ‘*artificium*’ is Latin, and ‘*stratagema*’ Greek.

By and by, however, as a language becomes itself an object of closer attention, at the same time that society, advancing from a simpler to a more complex state, has more things to designate, more thoughts to utter, and more distinctions to draw, it is felt as a waste of resources to employ two or more words for the signifying of one and the same thing. Men feel, and rightly, that with a boundless world lying around them and demanding to be catalogued and named, and which they only make their own in the measure and to the extent that they do name it, with infinite shades and varieties of thought and feeling subsisting in their own minds, and claiming to find utterance in words, it is a wanton extravagance to expend two or more signs on that which could adequately be set forth by one—an extravagance in one part of their expenditure, which will be almost sure to issue in, and to be punished by, a corresponding scantness and straitness in another. Some thought or feeling will wholly want its adequate sign, because another has two.* Hereupon that which has

* We have a memorable example of this in the history of the great controversy of the Church with the Arians. At the beginning of this, the upholders of the Catholic faith used *οὐσία* and *ὑπόστασις* as identical in force and meaning with one another, Athanasius, in as many words, affirming them to be such. As, however, the

been well called the process of 'desynonymizing' begins—that is, of gradually discriminating in use between words which have hitherto been accounted perfectly equivalent, and, as such, indifferently employed. It is a positive enriching of a language when this process is at any point felt to be accomplished, when two or more words, once promiscuously used, have had each its own peculiar domain assigned to it, which it shall not itself overstep, upon which the others shall not encroach. This may seem at first sight but as a better regulation of old territory; for all practical purposes it is the acquisition of new.

This desynonymizing process is not effected according to any prearranged purpose or plan. The working genius of the language accomplishes its own objects, causes these synonymous words insensibly to fall off from one another, and to acquire separate and peculiar meanings. The most that any single writer can do, save indeed in the terminology of science, is to assist an already existing inclination, to bring to the clear

controversy went forward, it was perceived that doctrinal results of the highest importance might be fixed and secured for the Church through the assigning severally to these words distinct modifications of meaning. This accordingly, in the Greek Church, was done; while the Latin, desiring to move *pari passu*, did yet find itself most seriously embarrassed and hindered in so doing by the fact that it had, or thought that it had, but the one word, 'substantia,' to correspond to the two Greek.

consciousness of all that which already has been obscurely felt by many, and thus to hasten the process of this disengagement, or, as it has been well expressed, 'to regulate and ordinate the evident nisus and tendency of the popular usage into a severe definition;' and establish on a firm basis the distinction, so that it shall not be lost sight of or brought into question again. Thus long before Wordsworth wrote, it was obscurely felt by many that in 'imagination' there was more of the earnest, in 'fancy' of the play, of the spirit, that the first was a loftier faculty and power than the second. The tendency of the language was all in this direction. None would for some years back have employed 'fancy' as Milton employs it,* ascribing to it operations which we have learned to reserve for 'imagination' alone, and indeed subordinating 'imaginings' to fancy, as a part of the materials with which it deals. Yet for all this the words were continually, and not without loss, confounded. Wordsworth first, in the *Preface* to his *Lyrical Ballads*, rendered it impossible for any, who had read and mastered what he had written on the matter, to remain unconscious any longer of the essential difference between them.† This is but one example, an illustrious

* *Paradise Lost*, v. 102-105.

† Thus De Quincey (*Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been neglected*): 'All languages tend to

one indeed, of what has been going forward in innumerable pairs of words. Thus in Wiclif's

clear themselves of synonyms, as intellectual culture advances; the superfluous words being taken up and appropriated by new shades and combinations of thought evolved in the progress of society. And long before this appropriation is fixed and petrified, as it were, into the acknowledged vocabulary of the language, an insensible *clinamen* (to borrow a Lucretian word) prepares the way for it. Thus, for instance, before Mr. Wordsworth had unveiled the great philosophic distinction between the powers of *fancy* and *imagination*, the two words had begun to diverge from each other, the first being used to express a faculty somewhat capricious and exempted from law, the other to express a faculty more self-determined. When, therefore, it was at length perceived, that under an apparent unity of meaning there lurked a real dualism, and for philosophic purposes it was necessary that this distinction should have its appropriate expression, this necessity was met half way by the *clinamen* which had already affected the popular usage of the words.' Compare what Coleridge had before said on the same matter, *Biogr. Lit.* vol. i. p. 90. It is to him we owe the word 'to desynonymize' (*ibid.* p. 87)—against which, indeed, purists will object that it is of hybrid formation, the prefix Latin, the body of the word Greek—his own contributions, direct and indirect, in this province being perhaps more in number and more important than those of any English writer; as, for instance, the disentangling of 'fanaticism' and 'enthusiasm,' which we mainly owe to him (*Lit. Rem.* vol. ii. p. 365); of 'keenness' and 'subtlety' (*Table-Talk*, p. 140); of 'poetry' and 'poesy' (*Lit. Rem.* vol. i. p. 219); of 'analogy' and 'metaphor' (*Aids to Reflection*, 1825, p. 198); and that on which he himself laid so great a stress, of 'reason' and 'understanding.'

time and long after, there seems to have been no difference recognized between a 'famine' and a 'hunger;' they both expressed the outward fact of a dearth of food. It was a genuine gain when, leaving to 'famine' this meaning, by 'hunger' was expressed no longer the outward fact, but the inward sense of the fact. Other pairs of words between which a distinction is recognized now which was not recognized some centuries ago are the following: 'to clarify' and 'to glorify;' 'to drench' and 'to drown;' 'to admire' and 'to wonder;' 'to convince' and 'to convict;' 'reign' and 'kingdom;' 'merit' and 'demerit;' 'mutton' and 'sheep;' 'feminine' and 'effeminate;' 'mortal' and 'deadly;' 'ingenious' and 'ingenuous;' 'needful' and 'needy;' 'voluntary' and 'wilful.'

A multitude of words in English are still waiting for a similar discrimination; which many of them, no doubt, in due time will obtain. Thus how real an ethical gain would it be, how much clearness would it bring into men's thoughts and actions, if the distinction which exists in Latin between 'vindicta' and 'ultio,' that the first is a moral act, the just punishment of the sinner by his God, of the criminal by the judge, the other an act in which the self-gratification of one who counts himself injured or offended is sought, could in like manner be fully established (it is vaguely perceived), between our

‘vengeance’ and ‘revenge;’ so that only ‘vengeance’ (with the word ‘avenge’) should be ascribed to God, and to men acting as the executors of his righteous doom; while all in which not a zeal for the righteousness of God, but men’s own evil and sinful passions are the impulsive motive, should be exclusively termed ‘revenge.’ As it now is, the moral disapprobation which cleaves, and cleaves justly, to ‘revenge,’ is oftentimes transferred almost unconsciously to ‘vengeance;’ while yet without vengeance it is impossible to conceive in an evil world any assertion of righteousness, any moral government whatever. If Coleridge had right, and few I think will dispute it, when he affirmed that ‘every new term expressing a fact or a difference not precisely or adequately expressed by any other word in the same language, is a new organ of thought for the mind that has learned it,’* we are justified in regarding these distinctions which still wait to be made as so much reversionary wealth in our mother tongue.

The causes mentioned above, that English, Anglo-Saxon in the main, yet draws so large a portion of its wealth from the Latin, and has further received, welcomed, and found place for many later additions, these have together effected that we possess in English a great many duplicates, not to speak of triplicates, or of such a

* *Church and State*, p. 200.

quintuplicate as that which I adduced just now, where the Saxon, French, Italian, Latin, and Greek had each yielded us a word. Let me mention a few duplicate substantives, Anglo-Saxon and Latin: thus we have 'shepherd' and 'pastor;' 'feeling' and 'sentiment;' 'handbook' and 'manual;' 'ship' and 'nave;' 'anger' and 'ire;' 'grief' and 'dolour;' 'kingdom,' 'reign' and 'realm;' 'love' and 'charity;' 'feather' and 'plume;' 'forerunner' and 'precursor;' 'fore-sight' and 'providence;' 'freedom' and 'liberty;' 'murder' and 'homicide;' 'moons' and 'lunes;'—this last word is not met in the singular. Sometimes, in theology and science especially, we have gone both to the Latin and to the Greek, and drawn the same word from them both: thus 'deist' and 'theist;' 'numeration' and 'arithmetic;' 'revelation' and 'apocalypse;' 'temporal' and 'chronic;' 'compassion' and 'sympathy;' 'supposition' and 'hypothesis;' 'transparent' and 'diaphanous;' 'digit' and 'dactyle.' But to return to the Anglo-Saxon and Latin, the main factors of our tongue. Besides duplicate substantives, we have duplicate verbs, such as 'to whiten' and 'to blanch;' 'to soften' and 'to mollify;' 'to unload' and 'to exonerate;' 'to cloak' and 'to palliate;' with many more. Duplicate adjectives also are numerous, as 'shady' and 'umbrageous;' 'unreadable' and 'illegible;' 'unfriendly' and 'inimical;' 'almighty' and 'omnipotent;' 'un-

changeable' and 'immutable.' Occasionally where only one substantive, an Anglo-Saxon, exists, yet the adjectives are duplicate, and the English, not adopting the Latin substantive, has admitted the adjective; thus 'burden' has not merely 'burdensome' but also 'onerous,' while yet 'onus' has found no place with us; 'priest' has 'priestly' and 'sacerdotal;' 'king' has 'kingly,' 'regal,' which is purely Latin, and 'royal,' which is Latin distilled through the French. 'Bodily' and 'corporal,' 'boyish' and 'puerile,' 'fiery' and 'igneous,' 'wooden' and 'ligneous,' 'worldly' and 'mundane,' 'bloody' and 'sanguine,' 'watery' and 'aqueous,' 'fearful' and 'timid,' 'manly' and 'virile,' 'womanly' and 'feminine,' 'sunny' and 'solar,' 'starry' and 'stellar,' 'yearly' and 'annual,' 'weighty' and 'ponderous,' may all be placed in the same list. Nor are these more than a handful of words out of the number which might be adduced; you would find both pleasure and profit in adding to these lists, and as far as you are able, making them gradually complete.

If we look closely at words which have succeeded in thus maintaining their ground, one no less than the other, we shall note that in almost every instance they have little by little asserted or themselves separate spheres of meaning, have in usage become more or less distinct. Thus we use 'shepherd' almost always in its primary meaning, keeper of sheep; while 'pastor' is

exclusively used in the tropical sense, one that feeds the flock of God ; at the same time the language having only the one adjective, ' pastoral,' that is of necessity common to both. ' Love ' and ' charity ' are used in our Authorized Version of Scripture promiscuously, and out of the sense of their equivalence are made to represent one and the same Greek word ; but in modern use ' charity ' has come predominantly to signify one particular manifestation of love, the supply of the bodily needs of others, ' love ' continuing to express the affection of the soul. ' Ship ' remains in its literal meaning, while ' nave ' has become a symbolic term used in sacred architecture alone. ' Kingdom ' is concrete, as the kingdom of Great Britain, ' reign ' is abstract, the reign of Queen Victoria. ' Illegible ' is applied to the handwriting, ' unreadable ' to the subject-matter written ; a man writes an ' illegible ' hand ; he has published an ' unreadable ' book. ' Foresight ' is ascribed to men, but ' providence ' for the most part designates, as *πρόνοια* also came to do, the far-looking wisdom of God, by which He governs and graciously cares for his people. It becomes boys to be ' boyish,' but not men to be ' puerile.' ' To blanch ' is to withdraw colouring matter : we ' blanch ' almonds or linen ; or the cheek by the withdrawing of the blood is ' blanched ' with fear ; but we ' whiten ' a wall, not by withdrawing some other colour, but by the super-

inducing of white; thus 'whited sepulchres.' When we 'palliate' our faults we do not seek 'to cloke' them altogether, but only to extenuate the guilt of them in part.

It might be urged that there was a certain preparedness in these words to separate off in their meaning from one another, inasmuch as they originally belonged to different stocks; and this may very well have assisted; but we find the same process at work where original difference of stock can have supplied no such assistance. 'Astronomy' and 'astrology' are both drawn from the Greek, nor is there any reason beforehand why the second should not be in as honourable use as the first; for it is the *reason*, as 'astronomy' the *law*, of the stars.* But seeing there is a true and a false science of the stars, both needing words to utter them, it has come to pass that in our later use, 'astrology' designates always that pretended science of imposture, which affecting to submit the moral

* So entirely was any determining reason wanting, that for some while it was a question *which* word should obtain the honourable employment, and it seemed as if 'astrology' and 'astrologer' would have done so, as this extract from Bishop Hooper makes abundantly plain (*Early Writings*, Parker Society, p. 331): 'The *astrologer* is he that knoweth the course and motions of the heavens and teacheth the same; which is a virtue if it pass not its bounds, and become of an astrologer an *astronomer*, who taketh upon him to give judgment and censure of these motions and courses of the heavens what they prognosticate and destiny unto the creature.'

freedom of men to the influences of the heavenly bodies, prognosticates future events from the position of these, as contrasted with 'astronomy,' that true science which investigates the laws of the heavenly bodies in their relations to one another and to the planet upon which we dwell.

As these are both from the Greek, so 'despair' and 'diffidence' are both, though the second more directly than the first, from the Latin. At a period not very long past the difference between them was hardly appreciable; one was hardly stronger than the other. If in one the absence of all *hope*, in the other that of all *faith*, was implied. In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a book with which every English schoolmaster will be familiar, 'Mistress *Diffidence*' is 'Giant *Despair's*' wife, and not a whit behind him in deadly enmity to the pilgrims; even as Jeremy Taylor speaks of the impenitent sinner's '*diffidence* in the hour of death,' meaning, as the context plainly shows, his despair. But to what end two words for one and the same thing? And thus 'diffidence' did not retain that energy of meaning which it had at the first, but little by little assumed a more mitigated sense, (Hobbes speaks of 'men's diffidence,' or distrust 'of one another,') till it has come now to signify a becoming distrust of ourselves, a humble estimate of our own powers, with only a slight intimation, as in the later use of the Latin '*verecundia*,' that perhaps this distrust is carried too far.

Again, 'interference' and 'interposition' are both from the Latin ; and here too there is no anterior necessity that they should possess those different shades of meaning which actually they have obtained among us ;—the Latin verbs which form their latter halves being about as strong one as the other. And yet in our practical use, 'interference' is something offensive ; it is the pushing in of himself between two parties on the part of a third, who was not asked, and is not thanked for his pains, and who, as the feeling of the word implies, had no business there ; while 'interposition' is employed to express the friendly peace-making mediation of one whom the act well became, and who, even if he was not specially invited thereunto, is still thanked for what he has done. How real an increase is it in the wealth and efficiency of a language thus to have discriminated such words as these ; and to be able to express acts outwardly the same by different words, according as we would praise or blame the temper and spirit out of which they sprung.*

* If in the course of time distinctions are thus created, and if this is the tendency of language, yet they are also sometimes, though far less often, obliterated. Thus the fine distinction between 'yea' and 'yes,' 'nay' and 'no,' once existing in English, has quite disappeared. 'Yea' and 'Nay,' in Wiclif's time, and a good deal later, were the answers to questions framed in the affirmative. 'Will he come?' To this it would have been replied, 'Yea' or 'Nay,' as the case might be. But 'Will he not come?'

Take now some words not thus desynonymized by usage only, but having an inherent etymological distinction,—one, however, which it might be easy to overlook, which, so long as we dwell on the surface of the word, we shall overlook; and see whether we shall not be gainers by bringing out the distinction into clear consciousness. Here are ‘arrogant,’ ‘presumptuous,’ and ‘insolent;’ we often use them promiscuously; yet let us examine them a little more closely, and ask ourselves, as soon as we have traced the lines of demarcation between them, whether we are not now in possession of three distinct thoughts, instead of a single confused one. He is ‘arrogant,’ who claims the observance and homage of others as his due (*ad rogo*); who does not wait for them to offer, but himself demands all this; or who, having right to one sort of observance, claims another to which he has no right. Thus, it was ‘arrogance’ in Nebuchadnezzar, when he required that all men should fall down before the image which he had reared. He, a man, was claiming for man’s work the homage which belonged only to God. But one is ‘presumptuous’ who *takes*

—to this the answer would have been, ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ Sir Thomas More finds fault with Tyndale, that in his translation of the Bible he had not observed this distinction, which was evidently therefore going out even then, that is in the reign of Henry VIII., and shortly after it was quite forgotten.

things to himself *before* he has acquired any title to them (*præ sumo*); as the young man who already takes the place of the old, the learner who speaks with the authority of the teacher. By and by all this may very justly be his, but it is 'presumption' to anticipate it now. 'Insolent' means properly no more than unusual; to act 'insolently' is to act unusually. The offensive sense which 'insolent' has acquired rests upon the feeling that there is a certain well-understood rule of society, a recognized standard of moral behaviour, to which each of its members should conform. The 'insolent' man is one who violates this rule, who breaks through this order, acting in an *unaccustomed* manner. The same sense of the orderly being also the moral, is implied in 'irregular;' a man of 'irregular,' is for us a man of immoral, life; and yet more strongly in the Latin language, which has but one word (*mores*) for customs and morals.

Or consider the following words: 'to hate,' 'to loathe,' 'to detest,' and 'to abhor.' Each of them rests on an image entirely distinct from the others; two, the first and second, being Anglo-Saxon, and the others Latin. 'To hate,' is properly to be *inflamed* with passionate dislike, the word being connected with 'heat,' 'hot;' just as we speak, using the same figure, of persons being 'incensed' with anger, or of their anger 'kindling;' 'ira' and 'uro' being perhaps in like manner related; and 'excandescencia' at

any rate resting on the same image. 'To loathe' is properly to feel nausea, the turning of the stomach at that which excites first natural, and then by a transfer, moral disgust. 'To detest' is to bear witness against something, to feel ourselves obliged to lift up our voice and testimony against it. 'To abhor' is to shrink shuddering back, as one would from an object of fear, a hissing serpent rising in one's path. Thus our blessed Lord 'hated' to see his Father's house profaned, when, the zeal of that house consuming Him, He drove forth in anger the profaners from it (John ii. 15); He 'loathed' the lukewarmness of the Laodiceans, when He threatened to spue them out of his mouth (Rev. iii. 16); He 'detested' the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and Scribes, when He proclaimed their sin, and uttered those eight woes against them (Matt. xxiii.); He 'abhorred' the evil suggestions of Satan, when He bade the Tempter to get behind Him, seeking to put a distance between Himself and him (Matt. iv. 10).

Sometimes words have no right at all to be considered synonyms, and yet are constantly used one for the other; having in fact more need than synonyms themselves to be discriminated. Thus, what confusion is often made between 'genuine' and 'authentic;' what inaccuracy exists in their use. And yet the distinction is a very plain one. A 'genuine' work is one written by the author whose name it bears; an

‘authentic’ work is one which relates truthfully the matters of which it treats. For example, the apocryphal *Gospel of St. Thomas* is neither ‘genuine’ nor ‘authentic.’ It is not ‘genuine,’ for St. Thomas did not write it; it is not ‘authentic,’ for its contents are mainly fables and lies. *The History of the Alexandrian War*, which passes under Cæsar’s name, is not ‘genuine,’ for he did not write it; it is ‘authentic,’ being in the main a truthful record of the events which it professes to relate. Thiers’ *History of the French Empire*, on the contrary, is ‘genuine,’ for he is certainly the author, but very far indeed from ‘authentic;’ while Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War* is ‘authentic’ and ‘genuine’ both.

You will observe that in most of the words just adduced, I have sought to refer their usage to their etymologies, to follow the guidance of these, and by the same aid to trace the lines of demarcation which divide them. For I cannot but think it an omission in a very instructive volume upon synonyms edited by the late Archbishop Whately, and a partial diminution of its usefulness, that in the valuation of words reference is so seldom made to these, the writer relying almost entirely on present usage, and the tact and instinct of a cultivated mind for the appreciation of them aright. The accomplished author (or authoress) of this book indeed justifies this omission on the ground that a book of

synonyms has to do with the present relative value of words, not with their roots and derivations ; and further, that a reference to these brings in often what is only a disturbing force in the process, tending to confuse rather than to clear.* But while it is quite true that words may often ride very slackly at anchor on their etymologies, may be borne hither and thither by the shifting tides and currents of usage, yet are they for the most part still holden by them. Very few have broken away and drifted from their moorings altogether. A 'novelist,' or writer of *new* tales in the present day is very different from a 'novelist' or upholder of *new* theories in politics and religion, of two hundred years ago ; yet the idea of *newness* is common to them both. A 'naturalist' was then a denier of revealed truth, of any but *natural* religion ; he is now an

* Among words whose etymology might mislead as to their present meaning, the writer adduces 'allegiance,' which by usage signifies 'the fidelity of the subject to his prince,' while the etymology would rather suggest 'conformity to law.' But whatever the derivation of 'liege,' 'ligantia,' 'allegiantia,' 'allegiance,' and whether 'ligare' is to be found in them or no, it is certain that 'lex' is not. Algernon Sidney (*Discourse concerning Government*, c. iii. § 36) falls into the same mistake ; who, replying to some who maintained that submission was due to kings, even though these should violate the fundamental laws of the state, observes that the very word 'allegiance,' of which they made so much, refuted them ; for this was plainly 'such an obedience as the law requires.'

investigator, often a devout one, of *nature* and of her laws; yet the word has remained true to its etymology all the while. A 'methodist' was once a follower of a certain 'method' of philosophical induction, now of a 'method' in the fulfilment of religious duties; but in either case 'method,' or orderly progression, is the soul of the word. Take other words which have changed or modified their meaning—'plantations,' for instance, which were once colonies of men (and indeed we still 'plant' a colony), but are now nurseries of young trees, and you will find the same to hold good. '*Ecstasy*' was madness, it *is* intense delight; but has in no wise thereby broken with the meaning from which it started, since it is the nature alike of this and that *to set men out of and beside themselves*.

And even when the fact is not so obvious as in these cases, the etymology of a word exercises an unconscious influence upon its uses, oftentimes makes itself felt when least expected, so that a word, after seeming quite to have forgotten, will after longest wanderings return to it again. And one main art of a great poet or prose writer, who wishes to add emphasis to his style, to evoke the latent forces of his native tongue, will very often consist in reconnecting a word by his use of it with its original derivation, in not suffering it to forget itself and its origin, though it would. How often and with what

signal effect does Milton compel a word to return to its original source, and if I may so say, 'antiquam exquirere matrem;' while yet how often the fact that he is doing this passes even by scholars unobserved.* And if all this were

* Any one who desires, as he reads Milton, thoroughly to understand him, will do well to be ever on the watch for such recalling, upon his part, of words to their primitive sense; and as often as he detects, to make accurate note of it for his own use, and, so far as he is a teacher, for the use of others. Take a few examples out of many: 'ambition' (*P. L.* i. 262; *S. A.* 247); 'astonished' (*P. L.* i. 266); 'pomp' (*P. L.* viii. 61); 'chaos' (*P. L.* vi. 55); 'seditious' (*P. L.* vi. 152); 'diamond' (*P. L.* vi. 364); 'extenuate' (*P. L.* x. 645); 'implicit' (*P. L.* vii. 323); 'indorse' (*P. R.* iii. 329); 'empiric' (*P. L.* v. 440); 'emblem' (*P. L.* iv. 703); 'entire' (= integer, *P. L.* ix. 292); 'secular' (*S. A.* 1707); 'sagacious' (*P. L.* x. 281); 'transact' (*P. L.* vi. 286); 'secure' (*P. L.* vi. 638); 'engine' (*P. L.* i. 750); 'afflicted' (*P. L.* i. 186); 'infringe' (*P. R.* i. 62). We may note in Jeremy Taylor a similar use of words; thus, 'insolent' for unusual, 'metal' for mine, 'irritation' for a making vain, 'extant' for standing out (applied to a bas-relief), 'contrition' for bruising ('the *contrition* of the serpent'), 'probable' for worthy of approval ('a *probable* doctor'). The author of the excellent *Lexique de la Langue de Corneille* claims the same merit for him and for his great contemporaries or immediate successors: 'Faire rendre aux mots tout ce qu'ils peuvent donner, en varier habilement les acceptions et les nuances, les ramener à leur origine, les retremper fréquemment à leur source étymologique, constituait un des secrets principaux des grands écrivains du dix-septième siècle.' It is this putting of old words in a new light, and to a new use,

not so, yet the past history of a word, which history must needs *start* from its derivation, how soon soever that may be left behind, is surely a necessary element in its present valuation. What Barrow says is quite true, that 'knowing the primitive meaning of words can seldom or never *determine* their meaning anywhere, they often in common use declining from it;' but though it cannot determine, it can as little be left safely out of sight, when this determination is being sought. A man may be wholly different now from what once he was, yet not the less to know his antecedents is needful, before we can ever perfectly understand his present self; and the same holds good with a word.

There is often a moral gain in the possession of synonyms, enabling us, as they do, to say exactly what we intend, without exaggerating or the putting of more into our words than we feel in our hearts, allowing us to be at once courteous and precise. Such moral advantage there is, for example, in the choice which we have between the words 'to felicitate' and 'to congratulate,' for the expressing of our sentiments and wishes in regard of the good fortune that happens to others. To 'felicitate' another is to wish him happiness, without affirming that

though that will be often the oldest of all, on which Horace sets so high a store:

Dixeris egregie, notum si callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum.

his happiness is also ours. Thus, out of that general goodwill with which we ought to regard all, we might 'felicitate' one almost a stranger to us ; nay, more, I can honestly 'felicitate' one on his appointment to a post, or attainment of an honour, even though I may not consider him the fittest to have obtained it, though I should have been glad if another had done so ; I can desire and hope, that is, that it may bring all joy and happiness to him. But I could not, without a violation of truth, 'congratulate' him, or that stranger whose prosperity awoke no lively delight in my heart ; for when I 'congratulate' a person (con gratulor), I declare that I am sharer in his joy, that what has rejoiced him has rejoiced also me. We have all, I dare say, felt, even without having analysed the distinction between the words, that 'congratulate' is a far heartier word than 'felicitate,' and one with which it much better becomes us to welcome the good fortune of a friend ; and the analysis, as you perceive, perfectly justifies the feeling. 'Felicitations' are little better than compliments ; 'congratulations' are the expression of a genuine sympathy and joy.

Let me illustrate the importance of synonymous distinctions by another example, by the words, 'to invent' and 'to discover ;' or 'invention' and 'discovery.' How slight may seem to us the distinction between them, even if we see any at all. Yet try them a little closer, try

them, which is the true proof, by aid of examples, and you will perceive that by no means can they be indifferently used ; that, on the contrary, a great principle lies at the root of their distinction. Thus we speak of the ‘invention’ of printing, of the ‘discovery’ of America. Shift these words, and speak, for instance, of the ‘invention’ of America ; you feel at once how unsuitable the language is. And why ? Because Columbus did not make that to be, which before him had not been. America was there, before he revealed it to European eyes ; but that which before *was*, he *showed* to be ; he withdrew the veil which hitherto had concealed it ; he ‘discovered’ it. So too we speak of Newton ‘discovering’ the law of gravitation ; he drew aside the veil whereby men’s eyes were hindered from perceiving it, but the law had existed from the beginning of the world, and would have existed whether he or any other man had traced it or no ; neither was it in any way affected by the discovery of it which he had made. But Gutenberg, or whoever else it may be to whom the honour belongs, ‘invented’ printing ; he made something to be, which hitherto was not. In like manner Harvey ‘discovered’ the circulation of the blood ; but Watt ‘invented’ the steam-engine ; and we speak, with a true distinction, of the ‘inventions’ of Art, the ‘discoveries’ of Science. In the very highest matters of all, it is deeply important that we be aware of and

observe the distinction. In religion there have been many 'discoveries,' but (in true religion I mean) no 'inventions.' Many discoveries—but God in each case the discoverer; He draws away the veils, one veil after another, that have hidden Him from men; the discovery or revelation is from Himself, for no man by searching has found out God; and therefore, wherever anything offers itself as an 'invention' in matters of religion, it proclaims itself a lie,—as are all self-devised worships, all religions which man projects from his own heart. Just that is known of God which He is pleased to make known, and no more; and men's recognizing or refusing to recognize in no way affects it. They may deny or may acknowledge Him, but He continues the same.

As involving in like manner a distinction which cannot safely be lost sight of, how important the difference, of which the existence is asserted by our possession of the two words, 'to apprehend' and 'to comprehend,' with their substantives 'apprehension' and 'comprehension.' For indeed we 'apprehend' many truths, which we do not 'comprehend.' The great mysteries of our faith—the doctrine for instance of the Holy Trinity, we lay hold upon it, we hang on it, our souls live by it; but we do not '*comprehend*' it, that is, we do not take it all in; for it is a necessary attribute of God that He is *incomprehensible*; if He were not so, either He

would not be God, or the being that comprehended Him would be God also. But it also belongs to the idea of God that He may be ‘*apprehended*,’ though not ‘*comprehended*,’ by His reasonable creatures ; He has made them to know Him, though not to know Him *all*, to ‘*apprehend*,’ though not to ‘*comprehend*’ Him. We may transfer with profit the same distinction to matters not quite so solemn. Thus I read Goldsmith’s *Traveller*, or one of Gay’s *Fables*, and I feel that I ‘comprehend’ it ;—I do not believe, that is, that there was anything in the poet’s mind or intention, which I have not in the reading reproduced in my own. But I read *Hamlet*, or *King Lear* : here I ‘apprehend’ much ; I have wondrous glimpses of the poet’s intention and aim ; but I do not for an instant suppose that I have ‘comprehended,’ taken in, that is, all that was in his mind in the writing ; or that his purpose does not stretch in manifold directions far beyond the range of my vision ; and I am sure there are few who would not shrink from affirming, at least if they at all realized the force of the words they were using, that they ‘comprehended’ Shakespeare ; however much they may apprehend in him.

How often ‘opposite’ and ‘contrary’ are used as if there was no difference between them, and yet there is a most essential one, one which perhaps we may best express by saying that ‘opposites’ complete, while ‘contraries’ exclude

one another. Thus the most 'opposite' moral or mental characteristics may meet in one and the same person, while to say that the most 'contrary' did so, would be manifestly absurd; for example, a soldier may be at once prudent and bold, for these are opposites; he could not be at once prudent and rash, for these are contraries. We may love and fear at the same time and the same person; we pray in the Litany that we may love and fear God, the two being opposites, and thus the complements of one another; but to pray that we might love and hate would be as illogical as it would be impious, for these are contraries, and could no more co-exist together than white and black, hot and cold, in the same subject at the same time. Or to take another illustration, sweet and sour are 'opposites,' sweet and bitter are 'contraries.'* It will be seen then that there is always a certain relation between 'opposites;' they unfold themselves though in different directions from the same root, as the positive and negative forces of electricity, and in their very opposition uphold and sustain one another; while 'contraries' encounter one another from quarters quite diverse, and one only subsists in the exact degree that it puts out of working the other. Surely this distinction cannot be an unimportant one either in the region of ethics or elsewhere.

* See Coleridge, *Church and State*, p. 18.

It will happen continually, that rightly to distinguish between two words will throw a flood of light upon some controversy in which they play a principal part, nay, may virtually put an end to that controversy altogether. Thus when Hobbes, with a true instinct, would have laid deep the foundations of atheism and despotism together, resolving all right into might, and not merely robbing men, if he could, of the power, but denying to them the duty, of obeying God rather than man, his sophisms could stand only so long as it was not perceived that ‘compulsion’ and ‘obligation,’ with which he juggled, conveyed two ideas perfectly distinct, indeed disparate, in kind. Those sophisms of his collapsed at once, so soon as it was perceived that what pertained to one had been transferred to the other by a mere confusion of terms and cunning sleight of hand, the former being a *physical*, the latter a *moral* necessity.

There is indeed no such fruitful source of confusion and mischief as this—two words are tacitly assumed as equivalent, and therefore exchangeable, and then that which may be assumed, and with truth, of one, is assumed also of the other, of which it is not true. Thus, for instance, it often is with ‘instruction’ and ‘education.’ Cannot we ‘instruct’ a child, it is asked, cannot we teach it geography, or arithmetic, or grammar, quite independently of the Catechism, or even of the Scriptures? No doubt you may; but

can you 'educate,' without bringing moral and spiritual forces to bear upon the mind and affections of the child? And you must not be permitted to transfer the admissions which we freely make in regard of 'instruction,' as though they also held good in respect of 'education.' For what is 'education'? Is it a furnishing of a man from without with knowledge and facts and information? or it is a drawing forth from within and a training of the spirit, of the true humanity which is latent in him? Is the process of education the filling of the child's mind, as a cistern is filled with waters brought in buckets from some other source? or the opening up for that child of fountains which are already there? Now if we give any heed to the word 'education,' and to the voice which speaks in the word, we shall not long be in doubt. Education must educe, being from 'educare,' which is but another form of 'educere;' and that is to draw out, and not to put in. 'To draw out' what is in the child, the immortal spirit which is there, this is the end of education; and so much the word declares. The putting in is indeed most needful, that is, the child must be instructed as well as educated, and 'instruction' means furnishing; but not instructed instead of educated. He must first have powers awakened in him, measures of spiritual value given him; and then he will know how to deal with the facts of this outward world; then instruction

in these will profit him ; but not without the higher training, still less as a substitute for it.

It has occasionally happened that the question which out of two apparent synonyms should be adopted in some important state-document has been debated with no little earnestness and vigour ; as at the great English Revolution of 1688, when the two Houses of Parliament were at issue whether it should be declared of James the Second that he had ‘abdicated,’ or ‘deserted,’ the throne. This might seem at first sight a mere strife about words, and yet, in reality, serious constitutional questions were involved in the debate. The Commons insisted on the word ‘abdicated,’ not as wishing to imply that in any act of the late king there had been an official renunciation of the crown, which would have been manifestly untrue ; but because ‘abdicated’ to their minds alone expressed the fact that James had so borne himself as virtually to have entirely renounced, disowned, and relinquished the crown, to have irrecoverably forfeited and separated himself from it, and from any right to it for ever ; while ‘deserted’ would have seemed to leave room and an opening for a return, which they were determined to declare for ever excluded ; as, were it said of a husband that he had ‘deserted’ his wife, or of a soldier that he had ‘deserted’ his colours, this language would imply not only that he might, but that he was bound to return. The speech of Lord Somers

on the occasion is a masterly specimen of synonymous discrimination, and an example of the uses in highest matters of state to which it may be turned. As little was it a mere strife about words when, at the restoration a good many years ago of our interrupted relations with Persia, Lord Palmerston insisted that the Shah should address the Queen of England not as 'Maleketh' but as 'Padischah,' refusing to receive letters which wanted this superscription.

Let me press upon you, in conclusion, some few of the many advantages to be derived from the habit of distinguishing synonyms. These advantages we might presume to be many, even though we could not ourselves perceive them; for how often do the great masters of style in every tongue, perhaps none so often as Cicero, the greatest of all,* pause to discriminate be-

* Thus he distinguishes between 'voluntas' and 'cupiditas'; 'cautio' and 'metus' (*Tusc.* 4. 6); 'gaudium,' 'lætitia,' 'voluptas' (*Tusc.* 4. 6.; *Fin.* 2. 4); 'prudentia' and 'sapientia' (*Off.* 1. 43); 'caritas' and 'amor' (*De Part. Or.* 25); 'ebrius' and 'ebriosus,' 'iracundus' and 'iratus,' 'anxietas' and 'angor' (*Tusc.* 4. 12); 'vitium,' 'morbus,' and 'ægrotatio' (*Tusc.* 4. 13); 'labor' and 'dolor' (*Tusc.* 2. 15); 'furor' and 'insania' (*Tusc.* 3. 5.); 'malitia' and 'vitiositas' (*Tusc.* 4. 15); 'doctus' and 'peritus' (*Off.* 1. 3). Quintilian also often bestows attention on synonyms, observing well (vi. 3. 17); 'Pluribus nominibus in eâdem re vulgo utimur; quæ tamen si diducas, suam quandam propriam vim ostendent;' he adduces 'salsum,' 'urbanum,' 'facetum,' 6. 3. Among Church

tween the words they are using; how much care and labour, how much subtlety of thought, they have counted well bestowed on the operation; how much importance do they avowedly attach to it; not to say that their works, even where they do not intend it, will be a continual lesson in this respect: a great writer merely in the precision and accuracy with which he employs words will always be exercising us in synonymous distinction. But the advantages of attending to synonyms need not be taken on trust; they are evident. How large a part of true wisdom it is to be able to distinguish between things that differ, things seemingly, but not really, alike, this is remarkably attested by our words 'discernment' and 'discretion;' which are

writers Augustine is a frequent and successful discriminator of words. Thus he separates off from one another 'flagitium' and 'facinus' (*De Doct. Christ.* 3. 10.); 'æmulatio' and 'invidia' (*Expl. ad Gal.* v. 20); 'arrha' and 'pignus' (*Serm.* 23. 8, 9); 'studiosus' and 'curiosus' (*De Util. Cred.* 9); 'sapientia' and 'scientia' (*De Div. Quæst.* 2. qu. 2); 'senecta' and 'senium' (*Enarr. in Ps.* 70. 18); 'schisma' and 'hæresis' (*Con. Cresc.* 2. 7); with many more. (See my *Augustine on the Sermon on the Mount*, p. 27). Among the merits of the Grimms' *German Dictionary* is the care which they and those who have taken up their work bestow on the discrimination of synonyms, as between 'degen' and 'schwert;' 'felde,' 'acker' and 'heide;' 'aar' and 'adler;' 'antlitz' and 'angesicht;' 'kelch,' 'becher' and 'glas;' 'frau' and 'weib;' 'butter,' 'schmalz' and 'anke;' 'kopf' and 'haupt;' 'klug' and 'weise.'

now used as equivalent, the first to 'insight,' the second to 'prudence;' while yet in their earlier usage, and according to their etymology, being both from 'discerno,' they signify the power of so seeing things that in the seeing we distinguish and separate them one from another.* Such were originally 'discernment' and 'discretion,' and such in great measure they are still. And in words is a material ever at hand on which to train the spirit to a skilfulness in this; on which to exercise its sagacity through the habit of distinguishing there where it would be so easy to confound.† Nor is this habit of discrimination

* L'esprit consiste à connaître la ressemblance des choses diverses, et la différence des choses semblables (Montesquieu).

† I will suggest here a few pairs or larger groups of words on which those who are willing to exercise themselves in the distinction of synonyms might perhaps profitably exercise their skill:—'fame,' 'popularity,' 'celebrity,' 'reputation,' 'renown;'—'misfortune,' 'calamity,' 'disaster;'—'impediment,' 'obstruction,' 'obstacle,' 'hindrance;'—'temerity,' 'audacity,' 'boldness;'—'rebuke,' 'reprimand,' 'censure,' 'blame;'—'adversary,' 'opponent,' 'antagonist,' 'enemy;'—'rival,' 'competitor;'—'affluence,' 'opulence,' 'abundance,' 'redundance;'—'conduct,' 'behaviour,' 'demeanour,' 'bearing;'—'execration,' 'malediction,' 'imprecation,' 'anathema;'—'avaricious,' 'covetous,' 'miserly,' 'niggardly;'—'hypothesis,' 'theory,' 'system' (see De Quincey, *Lit. Rem.* American ed. p. 229);—'masculine,' 'manly;'—'effeminate,' 'feminine;'—'womanly,' 'womanish;'—'malicious,' 'malignant;'—'savage,' 'barbarous,' 'fierce,' 'cruel,' 'inhuman;'—'low,' 'mean,'

only valuable as a part of our intellectual training; but what a positive increase is it of mental wealth when we have learned to discern between things which really differ, but have been hitherto confused in our minds; and have made these distinctions permanently our own in the only way by which they can be made secure, that is, by assigning to each its appropriate word and peculiar sign.

In the effort to trace lines of demarcation you may little by little be drawn into the heart of subjects the most instructive; for only as you have thoroughly mastered a subject, and all which is most characteristic about it, can you hope to trace these lines with accuracy and success. A Roman of the higher classes might bear four names: 'prænomen,' 'nomen,' 'cognomen,' 'agnomen;' almost always bore three. You will know something of Roman life when you can tell the exact story of each of these, and the precise difference between them. He will not be altogether ignorant of the Middle Ages and of the clamps which in those ages bound society together, who has learned thoroughly to distinguish between a 'fief' and a 'benefice.' He will have obtained a firm grasp on

'abject,' 'base;'—'to chasten,' 'to punish,' 'to chastise;'—'to exile,' 'to banish;'—'to declare,' 'to disclose,' 'to reveal,' 'to divulge;'—'to defend,' 'to protect,' 'to shelter;'—'to excuse,' 'to palliate;'—'to compel,' 'to coerce,' 'to constrain,' 'to force.'

some central facts of theology who can exactly draw out the distinction between 'reconciliation,' 'propitiation,' 'atonement,' as used in the New Testament; of Church History, who can trace the difference between a 'schism' and a 'heresy.' One who has learned to discriminate between 'detraction' and 'slander,' as Barrow has done before him, or between 'emulation' and 'envy,' in which South has excellently shown him the way,* or between 'avarice' and 'covetousness,' will have made no unprofitable excursion into the region of ethics.

How effectual a help, moreover, will it prove to the writing of a good English style, if instead of choosing almost at hap-hazard from a group of words which seem to us one about as fit for our purpose as another, we at once know which, and which only, we ought in the case before us to employ, which will prove the exact vesture of our thoughts. It is the first characteristic of a well-dressed man that his clothes fit him: they are not too small and shrunken here, too large and loose there. Now it is precisely such a prime characteristic of a good style that the words fit close to the thoughts: they will not be too big here, hanging like a giant's robe on the limbs of a dwarf; nor too small there, as a boy's garments into which the man has painfully and ridiculously thrust himself. You do not,

* *Sermons*, 1737, vol. v. p. 403.

as you read, feel in one place that the writer means more than he has succeeded in saying ; in another that he has said more than he means ; or in a third something beside what his precise intention was ; and all this from a lack of dexterity in employing the instrument of language, of precision in knowing what words would be the exactest correspondents and fittest exponents of his thoughts.*

What a wealth of words in almost every language lies inert and unemployed, certainly not least in our own. How much of what might be as its current coin, is shut up in the treasure-house of a few classical authors, or is never to be met at all but in the pages of the dictionary—we meanwhile in the midst of all this riches adjudging ourselves to a voluntary poverty, and often with tasks the most delicate and difficult to accomplish,—for surely the clothing of thought in its most appropriate garment of words is such,—needlessly depriving ourselves of a large portion of the helps at our command ; like some workman who, being furnished for an operation that will challenge all his skill with a dozen different tools, each adapted for its own special

* La propriété des termes est le caractère distinctif des grands écrivains ; c'est par là que leur style est toujours au niveau de leur sujet ; c'est à cette qualité qu'on reconnaît le vrai talent d'écrire, et non à l'art futile de déguiser par un vain coloris les idées communes. (D'Alembert.)

work, should in his indolence and self-conceit persist in using only one ; doing coarsely what might have been done finely ; or leaving altogether undone what, with these assistances, was quite within his reach. And thus it comes to pass that in the common intercourse of life, often too in books, a certain limited number of words are worked almost to death, employed in season and out of season—a vast multitude meanwhile being rarely, if at all, called to render the service which *they* could render far better than any other ; so rarely, that little by little they slip out of sight and are forgotten altogether. And then, perhaps, at some later day, when their want is felt, the ignorance into which we have allowed ourselves to fall, of the resources offered by the language to satisfy such new demands as may be made upon it, sends us abroad in search of outlandish substitutes for words which we already possess at home.*

And let us not suppose the power of exactly saying what we mean, and neither more nor less than we mean, to be merely a graceful mental accomplishment. It is indeed this, and perhaps there is no power so surely indicative of a high and accurate training of the intellectual faculties. But it is also much more than this : it has a

* Thus I observe in modern French the barbarous ‘*dérailer*,’ to get off the rail ; and this while it only needed to recall ‘*dérayer*’ from the oblivion into which it had been allowed to fall.

moral value as well. It is nearly allied to morality, inasmuch as it is nearly connected with truthfulness. Every man who has himself in any degree cared for the truth, and occupied himself in seeking it, is more or less aware how much of the falsehood in the world passes current under the concealment of words, how many strifes and controversies,

‘ Which feed the simple, and offend the wise,’

find all or nearly all the fuel that maintains them in words carelessly or dishonestly employed. And when a man has had any actual experience of this, and at all perceived how far this mischief reaches, he is sometimes almost tempted to say with Shakespeare, ‘ Out, idle words, servants to shallow fools ;’ to adopt the saying of his clown, ‘ Words are grown so false, I am loathe to prove reason with them.’ He cannot, however, forego their employment; not to say that he will presently perceive that this falseness of theirs whereof he accuses them, this cheating power, is not of their proper use, but only of their abuse; he will see that, however they may have been enlisted in the service of lies, they are yet of themselves most true ; and that, where the bane is, there the antidote should be sought as well. If Goethe’s *Faust* denounces words and the falsehood of words, it is by the aid of words that he does it. Ask then words what they mean, that

you may deliver yourselves, that you may help to deliver others, from the tyranny of words, and, to use Baxter's excellent phrase, from the strife of 'word-warriors.' Learn to distinguish between them, for you have the authority of Hooker, that 'the mixture of those things by speech, which by nature are divided, is the mother of all error.'* And although I cannot promise you that the study of synonyms, or the acquaintance with derivations, or any other knowledge but the very highest knowledge of all, will deliver you from the temptation to misuse this or any other gift of God—a temptation which always lies so near us—yet I am sure that these studies rightly pursued will do much in leading us to stand in awe of this gift of speech, and to tremble at the thought of turning it to any other than those worthy ends for which God has endowed us with a faculty so divine.

* See on all this matter in Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, chapters 9, 10, and 11 of the 3rd book, certainly the most remarkable in the *Essay*, *On the Imperfection of Words, Of the Abuse of Words, Of the Remedies of the Imperfection and Abuse of Words.*

LECTURE VII.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S USE OF WORDS.

AT the Great Exhibition of 1851, there might be seen a collection, probably by far the completest which has ever been got together, of what were called *the material helps of education*. There was then gathered in a single room all the outward machinery of moral and intellectual training ; all by which order might be best maintained, the labour of the teacher and the taught economised, with a thousand ingenious devices suggested by the best experience of many minds, and of these during many years. Nor were these material helps of education merely mechanical. There were in that collection vivid representations of places and objects ; models which often preserved their actual forms and proportions, not to speak of maps and of books. No one who is aware how much in schools, and indeed everywhere else, depends on what apparently is slight and external, would lightly esteem the helps and hints which such a collection would furnish to many. And yet it would be well for us to remember that even if

we were to obtain all this apparatus in its completest form, at the same time possessing the most perfect skill in its application, so that it should never encumber but always assist us, we should yet have obtained very little compared to that which, as a help to education, is already ours. When we stand face to face with a child, that word which the child possesses in common with ourselves is a far more potent implement and aid of education than all these external helps, even though they should be accumulated and multiplied a thousandfold. A reassuring thought for those who may not have many of these within their reach, a warning thought for those who might be tempted to put their trust in them. On the occasion of that Exhibition to which I have referred, it was well said, 'On the structure of language are impressed the most distinct and durable records of the habitual operations of the human powers. In the full possession of language each man has a vast, almost an inexhaustible, treasure of examples of the most subtle and varied processes of human thought. Much apparatus, many material helps, some of them costly, may be employed to assist education ; but there is no apparatus which is so necessary, or which can do so much, as that which is the most common and the cheapest—which is always at hand, and ready for every need. Every language contains in it the result of a greater number of educational processes and

educational experiments, than we could by any amount of labour and ingenuity accumulate in any educational exhibition expressly contrived for such a purpose.'

Being entirely convinced that this is nothing more than the truth, I shall endeavour in my closing lecture to suggest some ways in which you may effectually use this marvellous implement which you possess to the better fulfilling of that which you have chosen as the task and business of your life. You will gladly hear something upon this matter ; for you will never, I trust, disconnect what you may yourselves be learning from the hope and prospect of being enabled thereby to teach others more effectually. If you do, and your studies in this way become a selfish thing, if you are content to leave them barren of all profit to others, of this you may be sure, that in the end they will prove not less barren of profit to yourselves. In one noble line Chaucer has characterized the true scholar :—

‘And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.’

Resolve that in the spirit of this line you will work and live.

But take here a word or two of warning before we advance any further. You cannot, of course, expect to make for yourselves any original investigations in language ; but you can follow safe guides, such as shall lead you by right paths, even as you may follow such as can only

lead you astray. Do not fail to keep in mind that perhaps in no region of human knowledge are there such a multitude of unsafe leaders as in this; for indeed etymology, or the science of the origin of words, is one which many, professing for it an earnest devotion, have done their best or their worst to bring into discredit, and to make the laughing-stock at once of the foolish and the wise. Niebuhr has somewhere noted 'the unspeakable spirit of absurdity' which seemed to possess the ancients, whenever they meddled with this subject; but the charge reaches others beside them. Their mantle, it must be owned, has in these later times often fallen upon no unworthy successors.

What is commoner, even now, than to find the investigator of words and their origin looking round about him here and there, in all the languages, ancient and modern, to which he has any access, till he lights on some word, it matters little to him in which of these, more or less resembling that which he wishes to derive? and this found, to consider his problem solved, and that in this phantom hunt he has successfully run down his prey. Even Dr. Johnson, with his robust, strong, English common-sense, too often offends in this way. In many respects his *Dictionary* will probably never be surpassed. We shall never have more concise, more accurate, more vigorous explanations of the actual meanings of words, at the time when it was published,

than he has furnished. But even those who recognize the most fully this merit, must allow that he was ill equipped by any preliminary studies for tracing the past history of words ; that in this he errs often and signally ; sometimes where the smallest possible amount of knowledge would have preserved him from error ; as for instance when he derives the name of the peacock from the peak, or tuft of pointed feathers, on its head ! while other derivations proposed or allowed by him and others are so far more absurd than this, that when Swift, in ridicule of the whole band of philologists, suggests that 'ostler' is only a contraction of oat-stealer, and 'breeches' of bear-riches, it can scarcely be said that these etymologies are more ridiculous than many which have in sober earnest, and by men of no inconsiderable reputation, been proposed.

Oftentimes in this scheme of random etymology, a word in one language is derived from one in another, in bold defiance of the fact that no points of historic contact or connexion, mediate or immediate, have ever existed between the two ; the etymologist not caring to ask himself whether it was thus so much as possible that the word should have passed from the one language to the other ; whether in fact the resemblance is not merely superficial and illusory, one which so soon as they are stripped of their accidents, disappear altogether. Take a few specimens of this manner of dealing with words ;

and first from the earlier etymologists. They are often hopelessly astray, blind leaders of the blind.* Thus, what profit can there come of deducing, as does Varro, 'pavo' from 'pavor,' because of the fear which the harsh shriek of the peacock awakens; or with Pliny, 'panthera' from *πανθηρίον*, because the properties of all beasts meet in the panther; or what can they help who tell us that 'formica,' the ant, is 'ferens micas,' the grain-bearer? Medieval suggestions

* Ménage is one of these 'blind leaders of the blind,' of whom I have spoken above. With all their real, though not very accurate, erudition, his three folio volumes, two on French, one on Italian etymologies, have done nothing but harm to the cause which they were intended to further. Génin (*Récréations Philologiques*, p. 12-15) passes a severe but just judgment upon them. Ménage, comme tous ses devanciers et la plupart de ses successeurs, semble n'avoir été dirigé que par un seul principe en fait d'étymologie. . . . Le voici dans son expression la plus nette. Tout mot vient du mot qui lui ressemble le mieux. Cela posé, Ménage, avec son érudition polyglotte, s'abut sur le grec, le latin, l'italien, l'espagnol, l'allemand, le celtique, et ne fait difficulté d'aller jusqu'à l'hébreu. C'est dommage que de son temps on ne cultivât pas encore le sanscrit, l'hindoustani, le thibétain et l'arabe: ils les eût contraints à lui livrer des étymologies françaises. . . . Il ne se met pas en peine des chemins par où un mot hébreu or carthaginois aurait pu passer pour venir s'établir en France. Il y est, le voilà, suffit! L'identité ne peut être mise en question devant la ressemblance, et souvent Dieu sait quelle ressemblance! Compare Ampère, *Formation de la Langue Française*, pp. 194, 195.

abound, as vain, and if possible, vainer still. 'Apis,' a bee, is *ἄπους* or without feet, bees being born without feet, the etymology and the natural history keeping excellent company together. Or what shall we say of deriving 'mors' from 'amarus,' because death is bitter; or from 'Mars,' because death is frequent in war; or 'à morsu vetiti pomi,' because that forbidden bite brought death into the world; or with a modern investigator of language, and one of high reputation in his time, deducing 'girl' from 'garrula,' because girls are commonly talkative?

All experience, indeed, proves how perilous it is to etymologize at random, and on the strength of mere surface similarities of sound. Let me illustrate the absurdities into which this may easily betray us by an amusing example. A clergyman, who himself told me the story, had sought, and not unsuccessfully, to kindle in his schoolmaster a passion for the study of derivations. His scholar enquired of him one day if he were aware of the derivation of 'crypt'? He naturally replied in the affirmative, that 'crypt' came from a Greek word to conceal, and meant a covered place, itself concealed, and where things intended to be concealed were placed. The other rejoined that he was quite aware the word was commonly so explained, but he had no doubt erroneously; that 'crypt,' as he had now convinced himself, was in fact contracted from 'cry-pit;' being the pit where in days of

Popish tyranny those who were condemned to cruel penances were plunged, and out of which their cry was heard to come up—therefore called the ‘cry-pit,’ now contracted into ‘crypt’! Let me say, before quitting my tale, that I would far sooner a schoolmaster made a hundred such mistakes than that he should be careless and incurious in all which concerned the words which he was using. To make mistakes, as we are on the way to knowledge, is far more honourable than to escape making them through never having set out to seek knowledge.

But while errors like his may very well be pardoned, of this we may be sure, that they will do little in etymology, will continually err and cause others to err, who in these studies leave this out of sight for an instant—namely, that no amount of resemblance between words in different languages is of itself sufficient to prove that they are akin, even as no amount of apparent unlikeness in sound or present form is sufficient to disprove consanguinity. ‘Judge not according to appearance,’ must everywhere here be the rule. One who in many regions of human knowledge anticipated the discoveries of later times, said well a century and a half ago, ‘Many etymologies are true, which at the first blush are not probable;’ * and, as he might have added,

* Leibnitz (*Opp.* vol. v. p. 61): *Sæpe fit ut etymologiæ veræ sint, quæ primo aspectu verisimiles non sunt.*

many appear probable, which are not true. This being so, it is our wisdom on the one side to distrust superficial likenesses, on the other not to be dismayed by superficial differences. I cannot go into this matter; only I will say, Have no faith in those who etymologize on the strength of *sounds*, and not on that of *letters*, and of letters, moreover, dealt with according to fixed and recognized laws of equivalence and permutation. Never forget that illustrious scholar's word, that much in this region of knowledge is true which does not seem probable; nor the converse, perhaps still more important, that much seems probable which is not true. For an example of this last, 'Auge,' the German form of our 'eye,' is in every letter identical with the Greek for splendour (*αὐγή*); and yet, though there is a very intimate connexion between German and Greek, these have no relation with one another whatever; while, on the other hand, little, or almost nothing, as there seems of contact between 'Auge' and 'oculus,' they are certainly the same word. Of 'caput' and 'head,' of 'hospes' and 'guest,' of 'gelidus' and 'cold,' the same might be affirmed; so too of 'dens,' 'tooth,' and 'Zahn.*' Who, on the other hand, would not take for granted that our 'much' and the Spanish 'mucho,' identical in meaning, were also

* Compare Heyse, *System der Sprachwissenschaft*, p. 307.

in etymology nearly related? There is no connexion between them. Between 'vulgus' and 'Volk' there is as little. Not many years ago a considerable scholar identified the Greek 'holos' (ὅλος) and our 'whole,' and most of us, if I mistake not, have been tempted at one stage of our knowledge to do the same. They stand in no relation to one another.

Here then, as elsewhere, the condition of all successful investigation is to have learned to disregard phenomena, the deceitful shows and appearances of things; to have resolved to reach and to grapple with the things themselves. It is the fable of Proteus over again. He will take a thousand shapes wherewith he will seek to elude and delude one who is determined to extort from him that true answer, which he is capable of yielding, but will only yield on compulsion. The true investigator is deceived by none of these. He still holds him fast; binds him in strong chains; until he takes his proper shape at the last; and answers as a true seer whatever question may be put to him. Nor, let me say by the way, will that man's gain be small who, having so learned to distrust the obvious and the plausible, carries into other regions of study and of action the lessons which he has thus learned; determines to seek the ground of things, and to plant his foot upon that; to believe that a lie may look very fair, and yet be a lie after all; that the truth may show very un-

attractive, very unlikely and paradoxical, and yet be the very truth notwithstanding.

To return from a long, but not unnecessary digression. Convinced as I am of the immense advantage of following up words to their sources, of 'deriving' them, that is, of tracing each little rill to the river whence it was first drawn, I can conceive no method of so effectually defacing and barbarizing our English tongue, of practically emptying it of all the hoarded wit, wisdom, imagination, and history which it contains, of cutting the vital nerve which connects its present with the past, as the introduction of the scheme of phonetic spelling, which some have lately been zealously advocating among us. I need hardly tell you that the fundamental idea of this is that all words should be spelt as they are sounded, that the writing should, in every case, be subordinated to the speaking.* This, namely that writing should in every case and at all costs, be subordinated to speaking, which is everywhere tacitly assumed as not needing any proof, is the fallacy which runs through the whole system. There is, indeed, no necessity for this. Every word, on the contrary, has *two*

* I do not know whether the advocates of phonetic spelling have urged the authority and practice of Augustus as being in their favour. Suetonius, among other amusing gossip about this Emperor, records of him: *Videtur eorum sequi opinionem, qui perinde scribendum ac loquamur, existiment* (*Octavius*, c. 88).

existences, as a spoken word and a written ; and you have no right to sacrifice one of these, or even to subordinate it wholly, to the other. A word exists as truly for the eye as for the ear ; and in a highly advanced state of society, where reading is almost as universal as speaking, quite as much for the one as for the other. That in the *written* word moreover is the permanence and continuity of language and of learning, and that the connexion is most intimate of a true orthography with all this, is affirmed in our words, 'letters,' 'literature,' 'unlettered,' as in other languages by words exactly corresponding to these.*

The gains consequent on the introduction of such a change would be insignificantly small, the losses enormously great. There would be gain in the saving of a certain amount of the labour now spent in learning to spell ; an amount of labour, however, absurdly exaggerated by the promoters of the scheme. But even this gain would not long remain, seeing that pronunciation is itself continually altering ; custom is lord here for better and for worse ; and a multitude of words are now pronounced in a manner different from that of a hundred years ago, indeed from that of ten years ago ; so that, before very long, there would again be a chasm between the spelling and the pronunciation of words ;—

* As γράμματα, ἀγράμματος, *litteræ*, *belles-lettres*.

unless indeed the spelling varied, which it could not consistently refuse to do, as the pronunciation varied, reproducing each of its capricious or barbarous alterations; these last, it must be remembered, being changes not in the pronunciation only, but in the word itself, which would only exist as pronounced, the written word being a mere shadow servilely waiting upon the spoken. When these changes had multiplied a little, and they would indeed multiply exceedingly, so soon as the barrier which now exists was removed, what the language would before long become, it is not easy to guess.

This fact, however, though sufficient to show how ineffectual the scheme of phonetic spelling would prove, even for the removing of those inconveniences which it proposes to remedy, is only the smallest objection to it. The far more serious charge which we bring against it is, that in words out of number it would obliterate those clear marks of birth and parentage, which they bear now upon their fronts, or are ready, upon a very slight interrogation, to reveal. Words have now an ancestry; and the ancestry of words, as of men, is often a very noble part of them, making them capable of great things, because those from whom they are descended have done great things before them; but this would deface their scutcheon, and bring them all to the same ignoble level. Words are now a nation, grouped into tribes and families, some smaller, some

larger ; this change would go far to reduce them to a promiscuous and barbarous horde. Now they are often translucent with their inner thought, lighted up by it ; in how many cases would this inner light be then quenched ? They have now a body and a soul, the soul quickening the body ; then oftentimes nothing but a body, forsaken by the spirit of life, would remain. Both these objections were urged long ago by Bacon, who characterizes this so-called reformation, 'that writing should be consonant to speaking,' as 'a branch of unprofitable subtlety ;' and especially urges that thereby 'the derivations of words, especially from foreign languages, are utterly defaced and extinguished.'

From the results of various approximations to phonetic spelling, which at different times have been made, and the losses thereon ensuing, we may guess what the loss would be were the system fully carried out. Of those fairly acquainted with Latin, it would be curious to know how many have seen 'silva' in 'savage,' since it has been so written, and not 'salvage,' as of old ? or have been reminded of the hindrances to a civilized and human society which the indomitable forest, more perhaps than any other obstacle, presents. When 'fancy' was spelt 'phant'sy,' as by Sylvester in his translation of Du Bartas, and other scholarly writers of the seventeenth century, no one could doubt of its identity with 'phantasy,' as no Greek scholar could miss its

relation with *φαντασία*. Spell 'analyse' as I have sometimes seen it, and as phonetically it ought to be, 'analize,' and the tap-root of the word is cut. How many readers will recognize in it then the image of dissolving and resolving aught into its elements, and use it with a more or less conscious reference to this? It may be urged that few do so even now. The more need they should not be fewer; for these few do in fact retain the word in its place, from which else it might gradually drift; they preserve its vitality, and the propriety of its use, not merely for themselves, but also for the others that have not this knowledge. In phonetic spelling is, in brief, the proposal that the learned and the educated should of free choice place themselves under the disadvantages of the ignorant and uneducated, instead of seeking to elevate these last to their own more favoured condition.*

* The same attempt to introduce phonography has been several times made, once in the sixteenth century, and again some thirty years ago in France. What would be there the results? We may judge of these from the results of a partial application of the system. 'Temps' is now written 'tems,' the *p* having been ejected as superfluous. What is the consequence? at once its visible connexion with the Latin 'tempus,' with the Spanish 'tiempo,' with the Italian 'tempo,' with its own 'temporel' and 'temporaire,' is broken, and for many effaced. Or note the result from another point of view. Here are 'poids' a weight, 'poix' pitch, 'pois' peas. No one could mark in speaking the distinction between these;

Even now the relationships of words, so important for our right understanding of them, are continually overlooked; a very little matter serving to conceal from us the family to which they pertain. Thus how many of our nouns are indeed unsuspected participles, or are otherwise most closely connected with verbs, with which we probably never think of putting them in relation. And yet with how lively an interest shall we discover those to be of closest kin, which we had never considered but as entire strangers to one another; what increased mastery over our mother tongue shall we through such discoveries obtain. Thus the 'smith' has his name from the 'sturdy blows that he 'smites' upon the anvil; 'wrong' is the perfect participle of 'to wring,' that which has been 'wrung' or wrested from the right; as in French 'tort,' from 'torqueo,' is the twisted; the 'brunt' of the battle is its heat, where it 'burns' the most freely; the 'haft' of a knife, that whereby you 'have' or hold it.

and thus to the ear there may be confusion between them, but to the eye there is none; not to say that the *d* in 'poids' puts it for us in relation with 'pondus.' the *x* in 'poix' with 'pix,' the *s* in 'pois' with the Low Latin 'pisum.' In each case the letter which these reformers would dismiss as useless, and worse than useless, keeps the secret of the word. On some other attempts in the same direction see in D'Israeli, *Amenities of Literature*, an article *On Orthography and Orthoepey*; and compare Diez, *Romanische Sprache*, vol. i. p. 52.

This exercise of putting words in their true relation and connexion with one another might be carried much further. Of whole groups of words, which may seem to acknowledge no kinship with one another, it will not be difficult to show that they had a common parentage and descent. For instance, here are 'shire,' 'shore,' 'share,' 'shears;' 'shred,' 'sherd;' all derived from one Anglo-Saxon word, which signifies to separate or divide, and still exists with us in the shape of 'to sheer,' which made once the three perfects, 'shore,' 'share,' 'sheered.' 'Shire' is a district in England, separated from the rest; a 'share' is a portion of anything thus divided off; 'shears' are instruments effecting this process of separation; the 'shore' is the place where the continuity of the land is interrupted or separated by the sea; a 'shred' is that which is 'shered' or shorn from the main piece; a 'sherd,' as a pot-'sherd,' (also 'pot-share,' Spenser,) that which is broken off and thus divided from the vessel; these not at all exhausting this group or family of words, though it would take more time than we can spare to put some other words in their relation with it.

But this analysing of groups of words for the detecting of the bond of relationship between them, and their common root, may require more etymological knowledge than you possess, and more helps from books than you can always command. There is another process, and one

which may prove no less useful to yourselves and to others, which will lie more certainly within your reach. You will meet in books, sometimes in the same book, and perhaps in the same page of this book, a word used in senses so far apart from one another that at first it will seem to you absurd to suppose any bond of connexion between them. Now when you thus fall in with a word employed in these two or more senses so far removed from one another, accustom yourselves to seek out the bond which there certainly is between these several uses. This tracing of that which is common to and connects all its meanings can only be done by getting to its centre and heart, to the seminal meaning, from which, as from a fruitful seed, all the others unfold themselves; to the first link in the chain, from which every later one, in a direct line or a lateral, depends. We may proceed in this investigation, certain that we shall find such, or at least that such there is to be found. For nothing can be more certain than this (and the non-recognition of it is a serious blemish in Johnson's *Dictionary*), that a word has originally but one meaning, that all other uses, however widely they may diverge from one another and recede from this one, may yet be affiliated upon it, brought back to the one central meaning, which grasps and knits them all together; just as the several races of men, black, white, and yellow and red, despite

of all their present diversity and dispersion, have a central point of unity in that one pair from which they all have descended.

Let me illustrate this by two or three familiar examples. How various are the senses in which 'post' is used ; as 'post'-office ; 'post'-haste ; a 'post' standing in the ground ; a military 'post ;' an official 'post ;' 'to post' a ledger. Is it possible to find anything which is common to all these uses of 'post' ? When once we are on the right track, nothing is easier. 'Post' is the Latin 'positus,' that which is *placed* ; the piece of timber is 'placed' in the ground, and so a 'post ;' a military station is a 'post,' for a man is 'placed' in it, and must not quit it without orders ; to travel 'post,' is to have certain relays of horses 'placed' at intervals, that so no delay on the road may occur ; the 'post'-office avails itself of this mode of communication ; to 'post' a ledger is to 'place' or register its several items.

Once more, in what an almost infinite number of senses 'stock' is employed ; we have live 'stock,' 'stock' in trade or on the farm, the village 'stocks,' the 'stock' of a gun, the 'stock'-dove, the 'stocks' on which ships are built, the 'stock' which goes round the neck, the family 'stock,' the 'stocks,' or public funds, in which money is invested, with other 'stocks' besides these. What point in common can we find between them all ? This, that being all derived

from one verb, they cohere in the idea of *fixedness*, which is common to them all. Thus, the 'stock' of a gun is that in which the barrel is fixed; the village 'stocks' are those in which the feet are fastened; the 'stock' in trade is the fixed capital; and so too, the 'stock' on the farm, although the fixed capital has there taken the shape of horses and cattle; in the 'stocks' or public funds, money sticks fast, inasmuch as those who place it there cannot withdraw or demand the capital, but receive only the interest; the 'stock' of a tree is fast set in the ground; and from this use of the word it is transferred to a family; the 'stock' or 'stirps' is that from which it grows, and out of which it unfolds itself. And here we may bring in the 'stock'-dove, as being the 'stock' or stirps of the domestic kinds. I might group with these, 'stake' in both its spellings; a 'stake' is stuck in the hedge and there remains; the 'stakes' which men wager against the issue of a race are paid down, and thus fixed or deposited to answer the event; a beef-'steak' is a portion so small that it can be stuck on the point of a fork; and so forward.*

When we thus affirm that the divergent meanings of a word can all be brought back to some one point from which, immediately or mediately,

* See the *Instructions for Parish Priests*, p. 69, published by the *Early English Texts Society*.

they every one proceed, that none has primarily more than one meaning, it must be remembered that there may very well be two words, or it may be more, spelt as well as pronounced alike, which yet are wholly different in their derivation and primary usage; and that, of course, between such homonyms as these no bond of union on the score of this identity is to be sought. Neither does this fact in the least invalidate the assertion. We have in such cases, as Cobbett has expressed it well, the same combination of letters, but not the same word. Thus we have 'page,' the side of a leaf, from 'pagina,' and 'page,' a small boy, the Greek *παιδίον*; 'league,' a treaty, from 'ligare,' to bind, and 'league,' (leuca), a measure of distance, a word of Celtic origin; 'host' (hostis), an army, and 'host,' the Latin hospes, and 'host' (hostia), in the Roman Catholic sacrifice of the mass; 'riddle,' a sieve or small network, the Latin reticulum, and 'riddle,' an enigma, from another source; the 'Mosaic' law, and 'mosaic' work ('opus *musivum*'), work graceful, as connected with the *Muses*. We have two 'ounces' (uncia and onze); two 'seals' (sigillum and seol); two 'lakes' (lacus and lacca); two 'kennels' (canalis and canile); two 'schools,' a 'school' (schola) of philosophy, a 'school' (sceol) of whales; two 'partisans' (partisan and partesana); two 'quires' (choir and cahier); two 'corns' (korn and cornu); two 'ears' (ohr and ahre); two 'doles' (deuil

and theil) ; two 'perches' (pertica and perca) ; two 'salts' (sal and sault or saltus) ; two 'races' (ræs and the French race) ; two verbs 'to allow' (allocare and allaudare) ; three 'rapes' (as the 'rape' of Proserpine, the 'rape' of Bramber, 'rape'-seed) ; four 'ports' (porta, portus, port, Oporto) ; while other 'heterodynamic' words in the language (I borrow the epithet from Pott), are the following : 'bull,' 'crowd,' 'date,' 'fog,' 'fount,' 'gulf,' 'gust,' 'lime,' 'mint,' 'mole,' 'paddock,' 'pernicious,' 'plot,' 'pulse,' 'punch,' 'scale,' 'shrub,' 'toil.' You will find it profitable to follow these up at home, to trace out the two or more words which have clothed themselves in exactly the same outward form, and on what etymologies they severally repose ; so too, as often as you suspect the existence of homonyms, to make proof of the matter for yourselves, gradually forming as complete a list of these as you can.* You may usefully do the same in any other language which you study, for they exist in all. In all these the identity is merely on the surface and in sound, and it would, of course, be lost labour to seek for a point of contact between meanings which have no closer connexion with one another in reality than they have in appearance.

* For a nearly complete list of these heterodynamic words, see Matzner's *Engl. Grammatik*, vol. i. p. 187-204 ; and compare Dwight's *Modern Philology*, vol. ii. p. 311.

Let me suggest some further exercises in this region of words. There are some which at once provoke and promise to reward inquiry, by the evident readiness with which they will yield up the secret, if duly interrogated by us. Many, as we have seen, have defied, and will probably defy to the end, all efforts to dissipate the mystery which hangs over them; and these we must be content to leave; but many announce that their explanations cannot be very far to seek. Let me instance 'candidate.' Does it not argue an incurious spirit to be content that this word should be given and received by us a hundred times, as at a contested election it is, and we never ask ourselves, What does it mean? why is one offering himself to the choice of his fellows, called a 'candidate'? If the word lay evidently beyond our horizon, we might acquiesce in our ignorance; but resting, as manifestly it does, upon the Latin 'candidus,' it challenges inquiry, and a very little of this would at once put us in possession of the Roman custom for which it witnesses—namely, that such as intended to claim the suffrages of the people for any of the chief offices of the State, presented themselves beforehand to them in a *white* toga, being therefore called 'candidati.' And as it so often happens that in seeking information on one subject we obtain it upon another, so will it probably be here; for in fully learning what this custom was, you will hardly

fail to learn how we obtained 'ambition,' what originally it meant, and how Milton should have written—

‘To reign is worth ambition, though in hell.’

Or again, any one who knows so much as that ‘verbum’ means a word, might well be struck by the fact (and if he followed it up would be led far into the relation of the parts of speech to one another), that in grammar it is not employed to signify any word whatsoever, but restricted to the verb alone; ‘verbum’ is the verb. Surely here is matter for reflection. What gives to the verb the right to monopolize the dignity of being ‘the word’? Is it because the verb is the animating power, the vital principle of every sentence, and that without which, understood or uttered, no sentence can exist? or can you offer any other reason? I leave this to your own consideration.

We call certain books ‘classics.’ We have indeed a double use of the word, for we speak of the Greek and Latin as the ‘classical’ languages, and the great writers in these as ‘*the* classics;’ while at other times you hear of a ‘classical’ English style, or of English ‘classics.’ Now ‘classic’ is connected plainly with ‘classis.’ What then does it mean in itself, and how has it arrived at this double use? ‘The term is drawn from the political economy of Rome. Such a man was rated as to his income in the

third class, such another in the fourth, and so on; but he who was in the highest was emphatically said to be of *the* class, “classicus”—a class man, without adding the number, as in that case superfluous; while all others were *infra classem*. Hence, by an obvious analogy, the best authors were rated as “classici,” or men of the highest class; just as in English we say “men of rank” absolutely, for men who are in the highest ranks of the state.’ The mental process by which this title, which would apply rightly to the best authors in *all* languages, came to be restricted to those only in two, and these two to be claimed, to the seeming exclusion of all others, as *the* classical languages, is one constantly recurring, making itself felt in all regions of human thought; to which therefore I would in passing call your attention, though I cannot now do more.

There is one circumstance which you must by no means suffer to escape your own notice, nor that of your pupils—namely, that words out of number, which are now employed only in a figurative sense, did yet originally rest on some fact of the outward world, vividly presenting itself to the imagination; which fact the word has incorporated and knit up with itself for ever. If I may judge from my own experience, few intelligent boys would not feel that they had gotten something, when made to understand that ‘to insult’ means properly to leap as on the

prostrate body of a foe; 'to affront,' to strike him on the face; that 'to succour' means by running to place oneself under one that is falling; 'to relent,' (connected with 'lentus,' not 'lenis,') to slacken the swiftness of one's pursuit;* 'to reprehend,' to lay hold of one with the intention of forcibly pulling him back; 'to exonerate,' to discharge of a burden, ships being exonerated once; that 'to be examined' means to be weighed. They would be pleased to learn that a man is called 'supercilious,' because haughtiness with contempt of others expresses itself by the raising of the eyebrows or 'supercilium;' that 'subtle' (subtilis for subtexilis) is literally 'fine-spun;' that 'astonished' (attonitus) is properly thunderstruck; that 'imbecile,' which we use for weak, and now always for weak in intellect, means strictly (unless indeed we must renounce this etymology), leaning upon a staff (in bacillo), as one aged or infirm might do; that 'chaste' is properly white, 'castus' being a participle of 'candeo,' as is now generally allowed; that 'sincere' may be—I dare not affirm that it is—without wax, (sine cerâ,) as the best and finest honey should be; that a 'companion,' probably at least, is one with whom we share our bread, a messmate; that a 'sarcasm' is properly such a lash inflicted by the 'scourge

* 'But nothing might *relent* his hasty flight' (Spenser).

of the tongue' as brings away the *flesh* after it ; with much more in the same kind.

'Trivial' is a word borrowed from the life. Mark three or four persons standing idly at the point where one street bisects at right angles another, and discussing there the idle nothings of the day ; there you have the living explanation of 'trivial,' 'trivialities,' such as no explanation not rooting itself in the etymology would ever give you, or enable you to give to others. You have there the 'tres viæ,' the 'trivium ;' and 'trivialities' properly mean such talk as is holden by those idle loiterers that gather at this meeting of three roads.* 'Rivals' properly are those who dwell on the banks of the same river. But as all experience shows, there is no such fruitful source of contention as a water-right, and these would be often at strife with one another in regard of the periods during which they severally had a right to the use of the stream, turning it off into their own fields before the time, or leaving open the sluices be-

* I have allowed this explanation to stand ; yet with many misgivings whether 'trivial' is not from 'trivium' in another sense ; that is, from the 'trivium,' or three preparatory disciplines,—grammar, arithmetic, and geometry,—as contrasted with the four more advanced, or 'quadrivium,' which together were esteemed in the Middle Ages to constitute a complete liberal education. Preparatory schools were often called '*trivial* schools,' as occupying themselves with the 'trivium.'

yond the time, or in other ways interfering, or being counted to interfere, with the rights of their neighbours. And in this way 'rivals' came to be applied to any who were on any grounds in unfriendly competition with one another.

By such teaching as this you may often improve, and that without turning play-time into lesson-time, the hours of relaxation and amusement. But 'relaxation,' on which we have just lighted as by chance, must not escape us. How can the bow be 'relaxed' or slackened (for this is the image), which has not been bent, whose string has never been drawn tight? Having drawn tight the bow of our mind by earnest toil, we may then claim to have it from time to time 'relaxed.' Having been attentive and assiduous then, but not otherwise, we may claim 'relaxation' and amusement. But 'attentive' and 'assiduous' are themselves words which will repay us to understand exactly what they mean. He is 'assiduous,' who sits close to his work; he is 'attentive,' who, being taught, stretches out his neck that so he may not lose a word. 'Diligence' too has its lesson. Derived from 'diligo,' to love, it reminds us that the secret of true industry in our work is love of that work. And as truth is wrapped up in 'diligence,' what a lie, on the other hand, lurks at the root of 'indolence,' or, to speak more accurately, of our present employment of it! This, from 'in' and

‘doleo,’ not to grieve, is properly a state in which we have no grief or pain ; and employed as we now employ it, would have us to believe that indulgence in sloth constitutes for us the truest negation of pain. Now no one would wish to deny that ‘pain’ and ‘pains’ are often nearly allied ; but yet these pains hand us over to true pleasures ; while indolence is so far from yielding that good which it is so forward to promise, that Cowper spoke only truth, when, perhaps meaning to witness against a falsehood here, he spoke of

‘Lives spent in *indolence*, and therefore *sad*,’

not ‘therefore *glad*,’ as the word ‘indolence’ would fain have us to believe.

There is another way in which these studies I have been urging may be turned to account. Doubtless you will seek to cherish in your scholars, to keep lively in yourselves, that spirit and temper which find a special interest in all relating to the land of our birth, that land which the providence of God has assigned as the sphere of our life’s task and of theirs. Our schools are called ‘national,’ and if we would have them such in reality, we must neglect nothing that will foster a national spirit in them. I know not whether this is sufficiently considered among us ; yet certainly we cannot have Church-schools worthy the name, least of all in England, unless they are truly national as well. It is the anti-

national character of the Roman Catholic system, though I do not separate this from the anti-scriptural, but rather regard the two as most intimately connected, which mainly revolts Englishmen ; and if their sense of this should ever grow weak, their protest against that system would soon lose much of its energy and strength. Now here, as everywhere else, knowledge must be the food of love. Your pupils must know something about England, if they are to love it ; they must see some connexion of its past with its present, of what it has been with what it is, if they are to feel that past as anything to them.

And as no impresses of the past are so abiding, so none, when once attention has been awakened to them, are so self-evident as those which names preserve ; although, without this calling of the attention to them, the most broad and obvious of these foot-prints of time may continue to escape our observation to the end of our lives. Leibnitz tells us, and one can quite understand, the delight with which a great German Emperor, Maximilian the First, discovered that ‘Habsburg,’ or ‘Hapsburg,’ the ancestral name of his house, really had a meaning, one moreover full of vigour and poetry. This he did, when he heard it by accident on the lips of a Swiss peasant, no longer cut short and thus disguised, but in its original fulness, ‘Habichtsburg,’ or ‘Hawk’s-Tower,’ being no doubt the name of

the castle which was the cradle of his race.* Of all the thousands of Englishmen who are aware that Angles and Saxons established themselves in this island, and that we are in the main descended from them, it would be curious to know how many have realized to themselves a fact so obvious as that this 'England' means 'Angle-land,' or that in the names 'Essex,' 'Sussex,' and 'Middlesex,' we preserve a record of East Saxons, South Saxons, and Middle Saxons, who occupied those several portions of the land; or that 'Norfolk' and 'Suffolk' are two broad divisions of 'northern' and 'southern folk,' into which the East Anglian kingdom was divided. 'Cornwall' does not bear its origin quite so plainly upon its front, or tell its story so that everyone who runs may read. At the same time its secret is not hard to attain to. As the Teutonic immigrants advanced, such of the British population as were not either destroyed or absorbed by them retreated, as we all have learned, into Wales and Cornwall, that is, till they could retreat no further. This fact is evidently preserved in the name of 'Wales,' which means properly The foreigners,—the nations of Teutonic blood calling all bordering tribes by this name. But though not quite so apparent on the surface, this fact is also preserved in 'Cornwall,' written formerly 'Corn-

* *Opp.* vol. vi. pt. 2. p. 20.

wales,' or the land inhabited by the Welsh of the Corn or Horn. The chroniclers uniformly speak of North Wales and Corn-Wales.* These Angles, Saxons, and Britons or Welshmen, about whom our pupils may be reading, will be to them more like actual men of flesh and blood, who indeed trod this same soil which we are treading now, when we can thus point to traces surviving to the present day, which they have left behind them, and which England, as long as it is England, will retain.

The Danes too have left their marks on the land. We all probably are, more or less, aware how much Danish blood runs in English veins; what large colonies from Scandinavia (for probably as many came from Norway as from modern Denmark) settled in some parts of this island. It will be interesting to show that the limits of this Danish settlement and occupation may even now be confidently traced by the constant recurrence in all such districts of the names of towns and villages ending in 'bye,' which signified in their language, a dwelling or single village; as Netherby, Appleby, Derby, Whitby. Thus if you examine closely a map of Lincolnshire, one of the chief seats of Danish immigration, you will find one hundred, or well nigh a fourth part, of the towns and villages to have this ending, the whole coast being studded

* Isaac Taylor, *Names and Places*, 2nd edit. p. 63.

with them; while here in Hampshire it is utterly unknown. Or, again draw a line transversely through England from Canterbury by London to Chester, the line, that is, of the great Roman road, called Watling Street, and north of this six hundred instances of its occurrence may be found, while to the south there are almost none. 'Thorpe,' equivalent to the German 'dorf,' as Bishopsthorpe, Althorp, tells the same tale of a Norse occupation of the soil; and the termination, somewhat rarer, of 'thwaite' no less. On the other hand, where, as in this south of England, the 'hams' abound (the word is identical with our 'home'), as Buckingham, Egham, Shoreham, there you may be sure that not Norsemen but Germans proper took possession of the soil. 'Worth,' or 'worthy,' signifying, as it does, the place warded or guarded, tells the same story, as Bosworth, Kingsworthy. The 'stokes' in like manner, as Basingstoke, Itchenstoke, are Saxon, being places *stockaded*, with stocks or piles for defence.

There will sometimes, in a single name, be kept the record of two, or it may be more, great social and political changes, which have come over a land, and which have each left its deposit. 'When we have a stream called Wansbeck-water, and know that the three words of which the compound is made up, all signify water, the first being Celtic (as in *Wan's-ford*, *A-von*), the second German (*beck* = *bach*), the

last English, we at once recognize three changes of inhabitants, to whom the older name successively lost its significance.*

You are yourselves learning, or hereafter you may be teaching others, the names and number of the English counties or shires. What a dull routine task for them and for you this may be, supplying no food for the intellect, no points of attachment for any of its higher powers to take hold of! And yet in these two little words, 'shire' and 'county,' if you would make them render up even a small part of their treasure, what lessons of English history are contained! One who knows the origin of these names, and how we come to possess such a double nomenclature, looks far into the social condition of England in that period when the strong foundations of all that has since made England glorious and great were being laid; by aid of these words may detect links which bind its present to its remotest past; for of lands as of persons it may be said, 'the child is father of the man.' 'Shire,' as I observed just now, is connected with 'shear,' 'share,' and is properly a portion 'shered' or 'shorn' off. When a Saxon king would create an earl, it did not lie in men's thoughts, accustomed as they were to deal with realities, that such could be a merely titular creation, or exist without territorial jurisdiction; and a 'share' or

* Donaldson, *New Cratylus*, 3rd edit., p. 17.

'shire' was assigned him to govern, which also gave him his title. But at the Conquest this Saxon officer was displaced by a Norman, the 'earl' by the 'count'—this title of 'count' borrowed from the later Roman empire, meaning originally 'companion' (comes), one who had the honour of being closest companion to his leader; and the 'shire' was now the 'county' (comitatus), as governed by this 'comes.' In that singular and inexplicable fortune of words, which causes some to disappear and die out under the circumstances apparently most favourable for life, others to hold their ground when all seemed against them, 'count' has disappeared from the titles of English nobility, while 'earl' has recovered its place; although in evidence of the essential identity of the two titles, or offices rather, the wife of the earl is entitled a 'countess;' and in further memorial of these great changes that so long ago came over our land, the two names 'shire' and 'county' equally survive as in the main interchangeable words in our mouths.

A large part of England, all that portion of it which the Saxons occupied, is divided into 'hundreds.' Have you ever asked yourselves what this division means, for something it must mean? The 'hundred' is supposed to have been originally a group or settlement of one hundred free families of Saxon colonists. If this was so, we have at once an explanation of the strange

disproportion between the area of the 'hundred' in the southern and in the more northern counties—the average number of square miles in a 'hundred' of Sussex or Kent being three or four and twenty; of Lancashire more than three hundred. The Saxon population would naturally be far the densest in the earlier settlements of the east and south, while more to west and north their tenure would be one rather of conquest than of colonization, and the free families much fewer and more scattered.* But further you have noticed, I dare say, the exceptional fact that the county of Sussex, besides the division into hundreds, is divided also into 'rapes;' thus the 'rape' of Bramber, and so on. Now this 'rape' is a memorial of the violent transfer of landed property by William the Conqueror, the lands being rudely plotted out for division by the 'rope' or 'rape,' which was a favourite way with these Norman intruders; and thus we keep in this word a memento to the present day in our language of the rough and ready processes adopted by the men of other times.†

Let us a little consider, in conclusion, how we may usefully bring our etymologies and other notices of words to bear on the religious teach-

* Kemble, *The Saxons in England*, vol. i. p. 240.

† Isaac Taylor, *Names and Places*, 2nd edit. pp. 192, 365. Compare the use of *σχοίνισμα* in the Septuagint, as at Deut. xxxii. 9.

ing which we would impart in our schools. To do this with much profit we must often deal with words as the Queen does with the gold and silver coin of the realm. When this has been current long, and by often passing from man to man, with perhaps occasional clipping in dishonest hands, has lost not only the clear brightness, the well-defined sharpness of outline, but much of the weight and intrinsic value which it had when first issued from the royal mint, it is the sovereign's prerogative to recall it, and issue it anew, with the royal image stamped on it afresh, bright and sharp, weighty and full, as at first. Now to a process such as this the true mint-masters of language, and all of us may be such, will often submit the words which they use. Where use and custom have worn away their significance, we too may recall and issue them afresh. With how many it has thus fared!—for example, with one which will be often in your mouths. You speak of the 'lessons' of the day; but what is 'lessons' here for most of us save a lazy synonym for the morning and evening chapters appointed to be read in church? But realize what the Church intended in calling these chapters by this name; namely, that they should be the daily instruction of her children; listen to them yourselves as such; lead your scholars to regard them as such, and in this use of 'lessons' what a lesson for every one of us there may be! 'Bible' itself, while we not irreverently use it,

may yet be no more to us than the sign by which we designate the written Word of God. Keep in mind that it properly means the book, and nothing more; that once it could be employed of any book (in Chaucer it is so), and what matter of thought and reflection lies in this our present restriction of 'bible' to one book, to the exclusion of all others! So strong has been the sense of Holy Scripture being *the* Book, the worthiest and best, that one which explained all other books, standing up in their midst,—like Joseph's kingly sheaf, to which all the other sheaves did obeisance,—that this name of 'Bible' or 'Book' has been restrained to it alone: just as 'Scripture' means no more than 'writing;' but this inspired Writing has been acknowledged so far above all other writings, that this name also it has obtained as exclusively its own.

Again, something may be learned from knowing that the 'surname,' as distinguished from the 'Christian' name, is the name over and above, not 'sire'-name, or name received from the father, as some explain, but 'sur'-name (super nomen). There was never, that is, a time when every baptized man had not a Christian name, the recognition of his personal standing before God; while the surname, the name expressing his relation, not to the kingdom of God, but to a worldly society, is of much later growth, super-added to the other, as the word itself declares. What a lesson at once in the growing up of a

human society, and in the contrast between it and the heavenly Society of the Church, might be appended to this explanation! There was a period when only a few had surnames; had, that is, any significance in the order of things temporal; while the Christian name from the first was common to every man. All this might be brought usefully to bear on your exposition of the first words in the Catechism.

There are long Latin words, which, desire as we may to use all plainness of speech, we cannot do without, nor find their adequate substitutes in other parts of our language; words which must always remain the vehicles of much of that truth by which we live. Now in explaining these, make it your rule always to start, where you can, from the derivation, and to turn to that as often as you can. Thus you wish to explain 'revelation.' How much will be gained if you can attach some distinct image to the word, one to which your scholars, as often as they hear it, may mentally recur. Nor is this difficult. God's 'revelation' of Himself is a drawing back of the veil or curtain which concealed Him from men; not man finding out God, but God discovering Himself to man; all which is contained in the word. Or you wish to explain 'absolution.' Many will know that it has something to do with the pardon of sins; but how much more accurately will they know this, when they know that 'to absolve' means 'to loosen from:' God's

‘absolution’ of men being his releasing of them from the bands of those sins with which they were bound. Here every one will connect a distinct image with the word, such as will always come to his help when he would realize what its precise meaning may be. That which was done for Lazarus naturally, the Lord exclaiming, ‘Loose him, and let him go,’ the same is done spiritually for us, when we receive the ‘absolution’ of our sins.

Tell them that ‘atonement’ means ‘at-one-ment’—the setting at one of those who were at twain before, namely God and man, and they will attach to ‘atonement’ a definite meaning, which perhaps in no way else it would have possessed for them; and from this you may muster the passages in Scripture which describe the sinner’s state as one of separation, estrangement, alienation, from God, the Christian’s state as one in which he walks together with God, because the two have been set ‘at one.’ Or you have to deal with the following, ‘to redeem,’ ‘Redeemer,’ ‘redemption.’ Lose not yourselves in vague generalities, but fasten on the central point of these, that they imply a ‘buying,’ and not this merely, but a ‘buying back;’ and then connect with them, so explained, the whole circle of Scriptures which rest on this image, which speak of sin as a slavery, of sinners as bondsmen of Satan, of Christ’s blood as a ransom, of the Christian as one restored to his liberty.

Many words more suggest themselves ; I will not urge more than one ; but that one, because in it is a lesson more for ourselves than for others, and with such I would fain bring these lectures to a close. How solemn a truth we express naming our work in this world our 'vocation,' or, which is the same in homelier Anglo-Saxon, our 'calling.' What a calming, elevating, ennobling view of the tasks appointed us in this world, this word gives us. We did not come to our work by accident ; we did not choose it for ourselves ; but, under much which may wear the appearance of accident and self-choosing, came to it by God's leading and appointment. How will this consideration help us to appreciate justly the dignity of our work, though it were far humbler work, even in the eyes of men, than that of any one of us here present ! What an assistance in calming unsettled thoughts and desires, such as would make us wish to be something else than that which we are ! What a source of confidence, when we are tempted to lose heart, and to doubt whether we shall carry through our work with any blessing or profit to ourselves or to others ! It is our 'vocation,' not our choosing but our 'calling ;' and He who 'called' us to it, will, if only we will ask Him, fit us for it, and strengthen us in it.

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